

Old-House Journal

RESTORATION TECHNIQUES

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1988 \$3.95

Porcelain Refinishing

Bathroom Fixtures

Moulding Repair

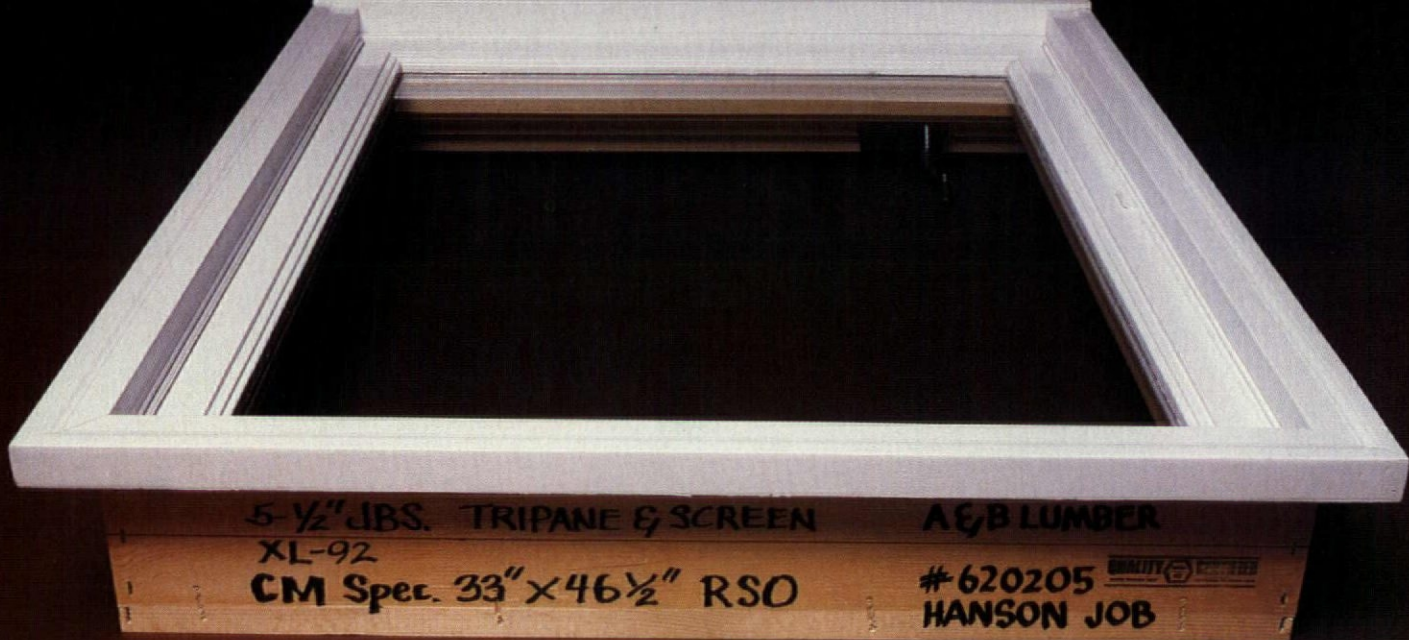
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HOUSE-PLANS CONTROVERSY

"One letter [on a topic] is a groundswell, two makes a trend, and *three* is a landslide." That was a favorite slogan of the editors when OHJ's circulation was much smaller. Each letter, we assume, represents the sentiments of other silent readers.

Three letters may not be a landslide anymore. But when the opinions are this thoughtful and strongly stated, we listen up.

To the editor:

Please don't put those ads for new fake Victorians in OHJ. Are you desperate for money? If so, please cut the magazine back to the way it was.
— C. Finch, McKinney, Texas

Dear Pat:

I have learned to love the transition from typewriter to typeset, and one color (the paper) to full color. But never has my jaw dropped as quickly as on reading your new section on "Historic House Plans."

The Old-House Journal is no place for this sort of fakery, and to blithely advocate the purchase of these plans only serves to cheapen the dedicated efforts of those whose blood, sweat, and tears have preserved real old houses and real neighborhoods throughout the U.S.

It's bad enough that an inexperienced but architecturally ambitious house owner can embellish beyond recognition a truly old house with the array of gingerbread and gimcracks that is available from your advertisers. Will this now be done with historic neighborhoods? The "Classic Cape Cod" in Santa Fe? The "Virginia Vernacular" in Brooklyn?
— Bruce M. Kriviskey, AIA/AICP, Washington, D.C.

Dear Patricia,

I also subscribe to a decorating magazine devoted to Victorian houses, and I'm always being treated to photographs of someone's "new"

Victorian. The owners have gone out of their way to use quality materials but — something's missing. There's no confusing them with real Victorians, even in murky photographs. I can usually spot one a mile away: typically, a "Queen Anne" with only a few fish-scale shingles and porch brackets, and a two-car garage facing forward, mouth agape.

I had often toyed with the idea of reproducing one of these homes. . . . Seeing all of these substitutes has made me feel insecure. Of course, I would spend months researching details, and I would spare no expense — but perhaps that's what these other folks thought, too.

Maybe a plain neo-Victorian is better than an ugly ranch house. Maybe a simple style from the past can be copied more accurately than an ornate one. But maybe old houses really ARE irreplaceable.

— Dawn C. McIntyre, Honesdale, Pa.

Whew! Our new department has a long life ahead. Only *Remuddling* gets hate mail like this — and it's our most popular page.

In my opinion, nobody should build new until all the old buildings are reconditioned and occupied. Anything else is wasteful. But I don't think I'm going to get my way.

Second best is that new construction should be attractive, respectful of surrounding buildings, and built well of good materials that have longevity and that age well. Most new construction falls short.

Having an architect design a new house raises the odds that it will be decent. Realistically, that's uncommon. For over a hundred years, houses have been built from published plans. And I believe that if an owner/builder uses a plan like one we've chosen, the odds go up that the building will be a good one.

These plans specify masonry and clapboard, not brickface and vinyl.

"Fake" is a funny word. According to the proposition in the letters

above, the Greek Revival houses we find worthy of restoration are fake temples. The picturesque Victorian Gothic houses in this issue, then, are nothing more than fake medieval stonework rendered in high-maintenance wood. The Colonial Revival of the 1920s, we'd have to say, was inexcusable. With this line of reasoning, reproduction houses of that era cheapened our appreciation of true colonial houses. (In fact, a reproduction market always makes the originals more dear.)

When those houses were built, plenty of critics denounced them. But today we restore them. Why? Because (1) many were well built and, standing the test of time, have gained our respect; (2) with the advantage of historical perspective, we see them as physical evidence of the culture of the time.

Regarding neighborhood remodeling: There are Mission Revival houses in New York State and Shingle Style houses in Missouri and California Bungalows in Maryland. It's not our fault! That happened sixty or seventy years before OHJ was founded.

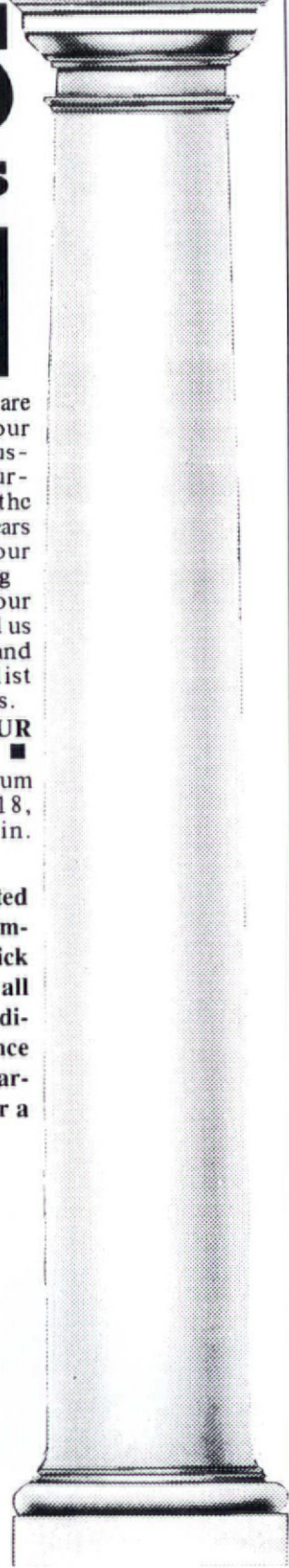
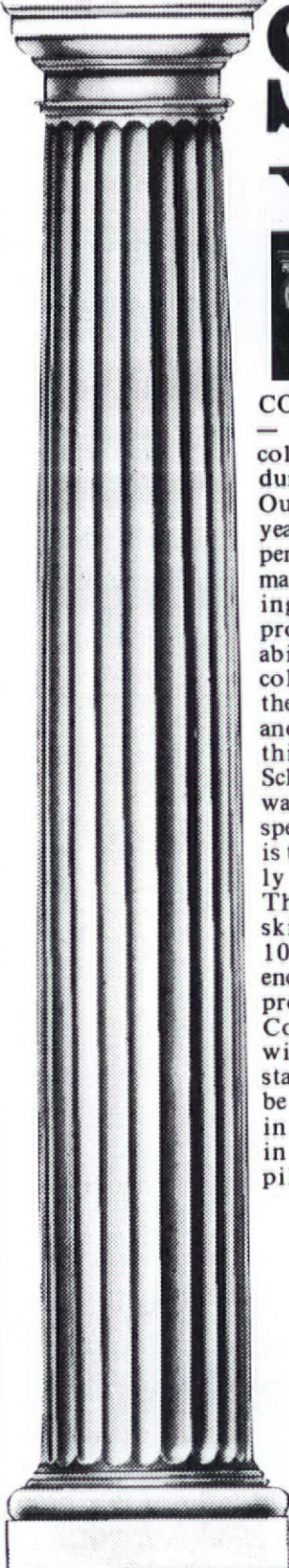
To go back further, the Adam style of the Georgian era showed up in New England because books by Britain's Adam brothers were circulated in the New World. So what's new? I don't necessarily approve of Cape Cods in Santa Fe, mind you (although adobe Capes would give an architectural historian of the future something to write his thesis about). That's why we give the plans names like "Virginia Vernacular" (which was not the designer's name for it). It's our suggestion of appropriateness.

Historical revival and caring about quality are not the exclusive domain of owners of antique buildings. And yes, old houses *are* irreplaceable.



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Parking Update

Dear OHJ:

Glad to see that you appreciate the ambience of Ridgewood's "Home-town USA" commercial center [July/August OHJ, p. 55] as we do.

Just for the record, we have retained not only the Novalux lamps and the facades of many of our buildings, but also — your caption notwithstanding — the diagonal parking on Oak Street.

Thanks for a terrific issue. "Carrots & Sticks" was a real keeper.

— Sue Ferdinand
Director, Historic Homes Div.
Weichert, Realtors
Ridgewood, N.J.

'House-Ghosts'

Dear OHJ:

I received the issue of OHJ that has the ghost stories [September/October 1988]. First, let me thank you for sending it, and again, for your interest. The thread of similarity that ran through all of the accounts of "houseguests" amazed me — all of the contributing writers are separated by geography, are unknown to each other, yet all of the stories share many common denominators. Of special interest to me were the statements by Dr. Osis, which impressed me with their insightfulness. During the time I spent in The House, I was usually too dismayed at

what was happening, as well as sick with the depression that emanated from there, to think that I — and my family members — might also be displaying courage. That was a nice prospect to think on.

Well, I didn't really mean to start soul searching (pardon the pun) in this letter to you, just to thank you and your staff. I loved the format and artwork of the layout. My little, true ghost story and I are honored.

Thanks again!

— Jeanne Frois
Metairie, Louisiana

Glad About Ads

Dear Ms. Poore:

On the issue of OHJ's acceptance of advertising: It has been a great help to us. When confronted with a City official or citizen who says that they can't fix a building without "modernizing" it because "no one does that work anymore" or they can't get the elements needed, we have often shown them ads for just the item they need. Their position is severely weakened when they're shown ads for a half-dozen firms supplying the part. Restoration is no longer an arcane specialty but rather just one of the normal sub-species of contracting, no different from selecting a good plumber or roofer. Thus, it has become very reasonable for us to ask for the work to be done to accepted standards for older buildings.

Thanks for the chance to comment.

— Lee J. Ellman
Assistant Planning Director
Yonkers, N.Y.

Grant Winners

Dear Ms. Poore:

Thank you for the \$1,000 grant from OHJ's revenue-sharing program. What an emotional boost to open your letter and read of our good fortune! The energy level in our group has certainly increased as a result of it.

continued on page 6



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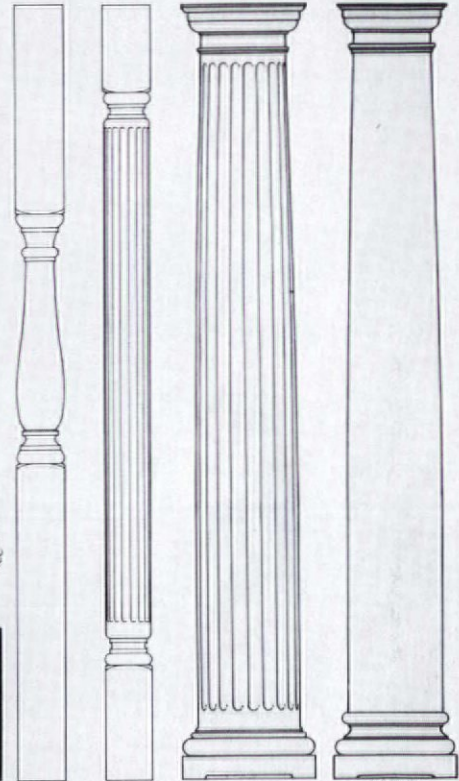
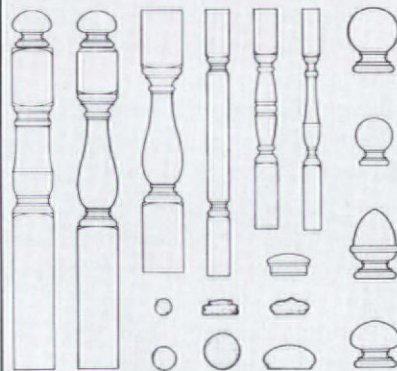
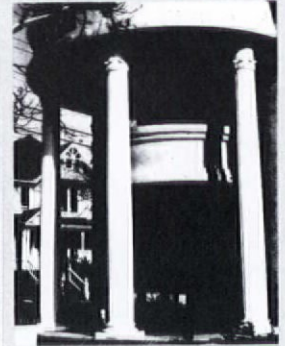
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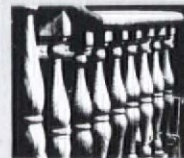
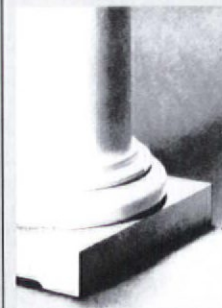
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PAG 3



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LETTERS

continued from page 4

We have considered several projects that will benefit from the unexpected funds. Our town has many remuddled or boarded-up storefronts in the main business district, and we are hoping to initiate a facade restoration/demonstration project. We still face many obstacles — not the least of which is convincing an owner of the value of such improvements.

Other projects being considered concentrate on raising preservation-awareness levels among residents outside the historic districts. These projects include an essay contest among local grade-school students on topics important to neighborhood/housing preservation, a photo or drawing contest of Plainfield's extensive building stock, and a possible scholarship program to aid students.

— William Friedrich
President, Plainfield C.A.N.
Plainfield, N.J.



Dear Patricia:

I wish to express our gratitude to the Old-House Journal for offering the \$1,000 grants through your revenue-sharing program.

Plans are to use this money towards the restoration of the 1850s Mad River-Lake Erie Freight Depot in Findlay, Ohio. This was the first freight depot in Findlay and was graciously donated by Mrs. Mary Kirk. The property still has its original tracksiding adjacent to the depot. A lot of work will be needed, including

painting, roof repair, replacement of wood siding, and electrical work. We hope to be able to use this building someday as a public information center and multi-purpose room for community meetings and activities. . . .

Thanks again for your revenue-sharing program.

— Greg Powell
Campaign Chairman
Preservation Guild of Hancock Cty.
Findlay, Ohio

[For more information on OHJ's revenue-sharing and grant programs, call Jeanne Baldwin: (718) 636-4514. — ed.]

Thoughts on Paint

Dear Editors:

Regarding the article "Early Exterior Paints" [*May/June 1988 OHJ*], which was about approximating the *continued on page 8*

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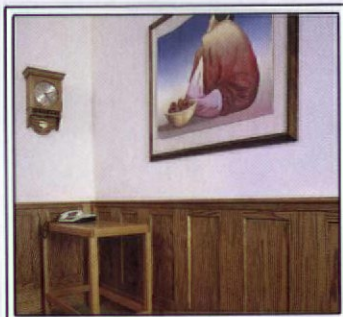


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LETTERS

continued from page 6

original colors and textures of early finishes, here's a point to ponder: If many early paint colors were so fugitive initially, and retained their vibrancy for so relatively short a time (a couple of years), why are some of today's conservators so adamant about reproducing the original (but unstable) color in a contemporary (but stable) counterpart? What's wrong with using the muted (e.g., early "Williamsburg" restoration era) colors that were once thought of as being original but were actually color-shifted versions of the originals? These muted hues were the ones that existed for most of the lifetime of the paint finish.

In other words, which is the truer "authentic" color: the short-lived original hues or the longer-lived, surviving faded colors? Thus, I don't object to the "traditional" Colonial

("phony," according to some) commercial color lines that have gained such popularity.

— J. Randall Cotton
OHJ Contributing Editor
Wallingford, Penn.

[In Mr. Cotton's article "Carrots & Sticks," July/August 1988, we credited him with the photo on page 28. He asks that we credit that photo to Rick Sicba.]

Family Memories

Dear Editor:

Catching up with a group of magazines accumulated during a busy period, I have just read "The Georgian & Federal Styles" in the March/April OHJ.

I was a bit startled to realize that, of the eight houses pictured and described, four were homes of my

relatives:

"Cliveden" in Germantown, Pennsylvania, was the family home of my great-great-great-grandmother, Margaret Chew, who wed Col. John Eager Howard of Baltimore.

"Wye House" near Easton, Maryland, was and is the home of cousins on the same side of my maternal line. Regarding the Bishop White House in Philadelphia: Mary White Morris, the Bishop's granddaughter, was married to my paternal great-grandmother's brother. (Dr. and Mrs. Paul Hamilton Wilkins lived in Liberty County, Georgia. A young son died and the mother was greatly distressed. The husband decided that they and their daughter should go back to visit in Philadelphia, and they took passage from Savannah on the Str. "Pulaski," which sank in a hurricane off Cape Hatteras with the loss

continued on page 10

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LETTERS

continued from page 8

of most of the passengers, including the Wilkins trio.)

The Robert E. Lee Boyhood Home was also the childhood home of my maternal grandfather, his brother, and his four sisters. One year my oldest grand-aunt had me drive her to Alexandria, Virginia, to show me that house and to describe her memory of Lee coming to visit after the Civil War and kneeling to pray in what had been his mother's bedroom. She also took me to "Stratford," Lee's birthplace; she had married the owner, Judge Charles E. Stuart, and went there as a bride to be mistress of the plantation. That was very amusing: As we were shown about by a guide, Aunt Ruth would murmur such things as, "That table used to be in the hall," "That big chair was in the room across the hall," etc. The guide was puzzled un-

til I explained how my aunt really did know whereof she spoke.

If you had happened to include "Hampton" in Baltimore County, my mother's family home, you would have covered the ground thoroughly. But that would have been *too* much of a coincidence!

— William D. Hoyt
Rockport, Mass.

Old-Store Living

Dear Patricia,

We loved your Commercial Restoration issue, but need more "everyday practicality" of running and decorating a small business. We try to create an atmosphere — from the music our customers hear to the cat that lives in our store, meowing at their ankles. (We even offer our shop after hours for meetings of local groups, as was done historically.) We

are *always* looking for more of these "details." Pictures of interiors of the old shops are extremely hard to find. We are lost as to where to find period (1850s) floorplans for our living area.

We are giving up a Victorian in the historic district to be "old-fashioned shop owners," living above the store. Many of our business friends have done the same. . . .

It's a whole new realm of "decoration research" for us, and we could use all the help we can get.

— Linda Sandlin
Valparaiso, Ind.

More About Floors

Dear OHJ:

Your article on old floors in the March/April issue ["*The Bare Facts About Early Floors*"] prompted me to write this letter, which I've had in
continued on page 12

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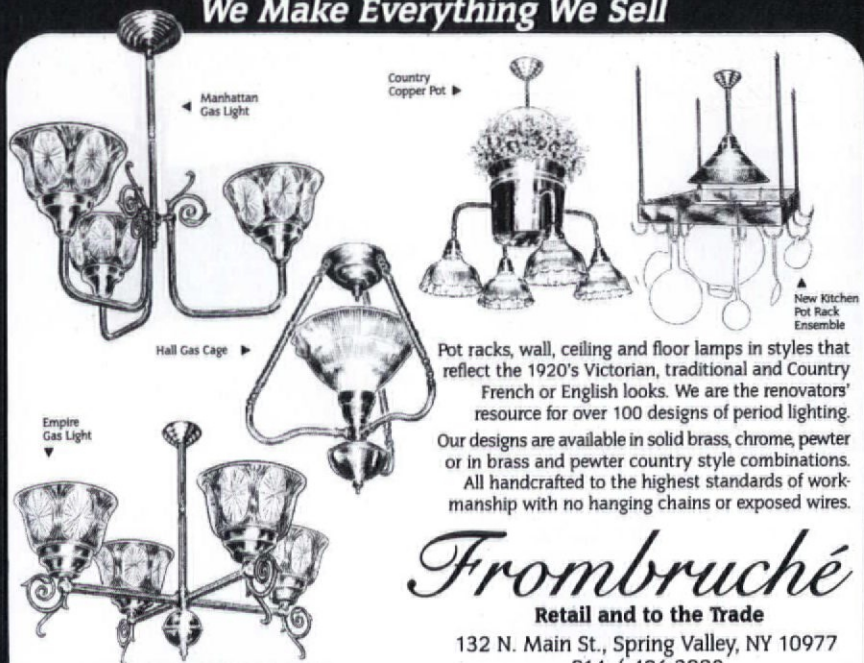
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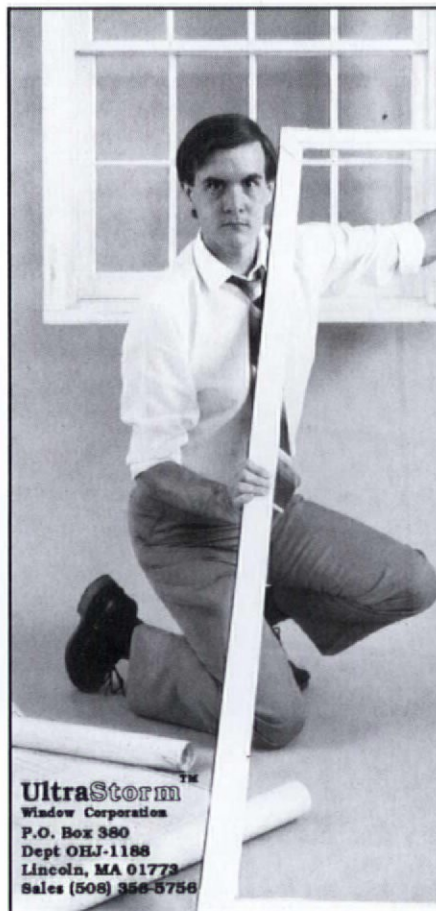
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continued from page 10

mind for some time. I want to add my 2¢ to the ongoing discussion/debate about how to handle floors in old houses.

The floor in question is in my kitchen, a late-19th-century addition to an 1830s Vermont farmhouse. The original floors were buried under so many layers of God-knows-what that we didn't attempt to find them. Besides, we had to level the floor to accommodate cabinets, appliances, etc. But we were determined to have an appropriate floor, so we salvaged boards from an outbuilding.

These random-width pine boards were rough and had never been planed, and they were *filthy*. After reading everything I could find in OHJ (and elsewhere) I decided reluctantly that sanding and polyurethane was the way to go — even though I was convinced, based on what I had read, that I would have “a

new floor made from old boards.”

Wrong. Because I believed the old boards would look the same as new ones when sanded, and because there weren't enough old ones, I also used two new boards. After sanding, the new boards stuck out like two white stripes in an otherwise honey-toned, warm floor of great character. A little diluted stain and time have made them indistinguishable from the old (well, almost). They've even begun to crack! I don't know if my experience is unusual, but it certainly is *not* true that sanding old boards gives you a new floor.

— Jane Williamson
Colchester, Vermont

[We quite agree that salvaged boards which have weathered outdoors have to be sanded before re-use. Power sanding old floorboards will, however, remove their surface patina

along with the undulating wear-patterns from 200 years of foot traffic.
— ed.]

Hometown Storefront

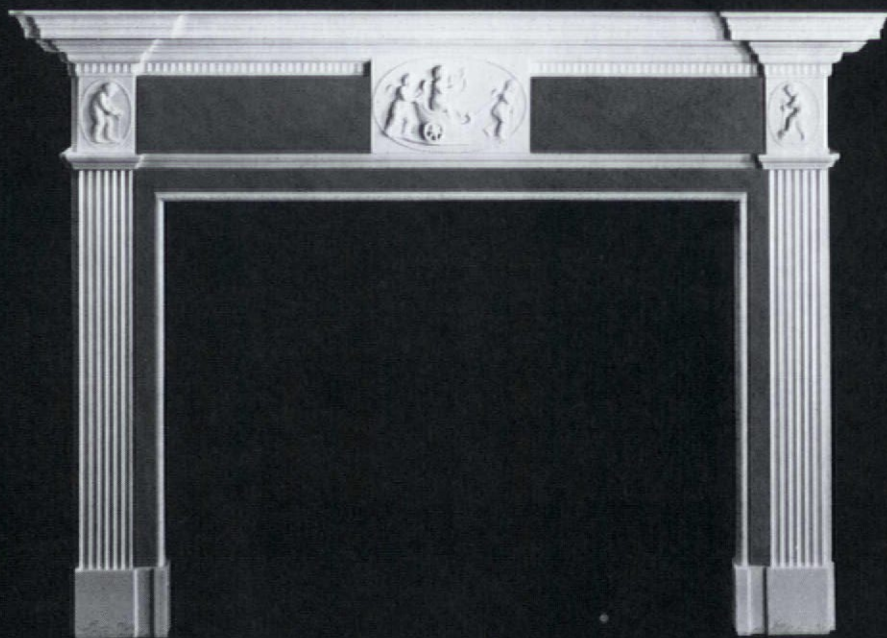
Dear OHJ,

I thoroughly enjoyed reading your special issue on commercial rehabilitation. Of particular interest was a picture of a building called Davie's on pages 40-41. Could this building be one from my hometown, Wellsville, N.Y.? I was so surprised to see it in your magazine and enjoyed reading the article on lens and prism glass.

Please respond so I can satisfy my curiosity. Thanks!

— Sharon Gardner
Rochester, N.Y.

[You got it: The photo of the Davie's store was taken in Wellsville by Sarah Adams. — Gordon Bock]



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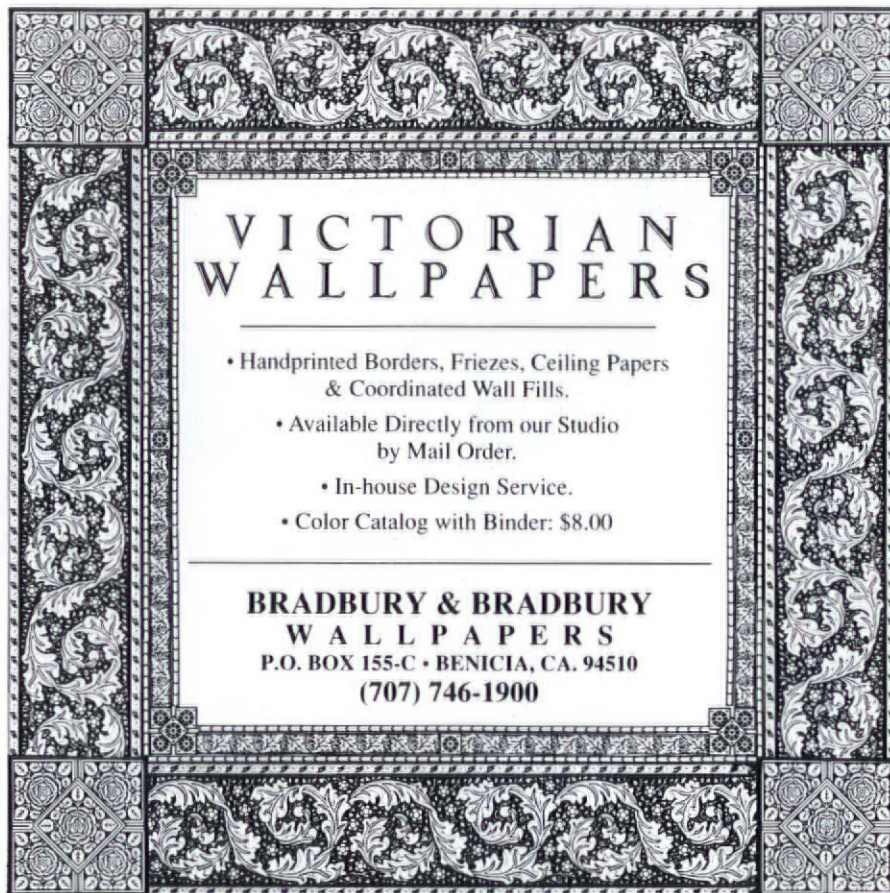
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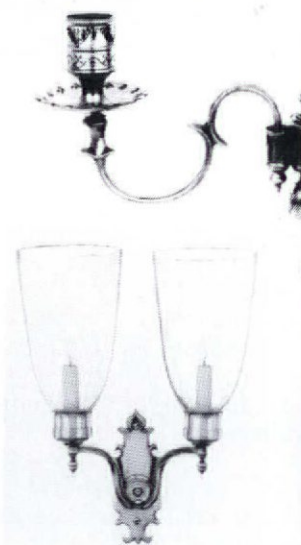
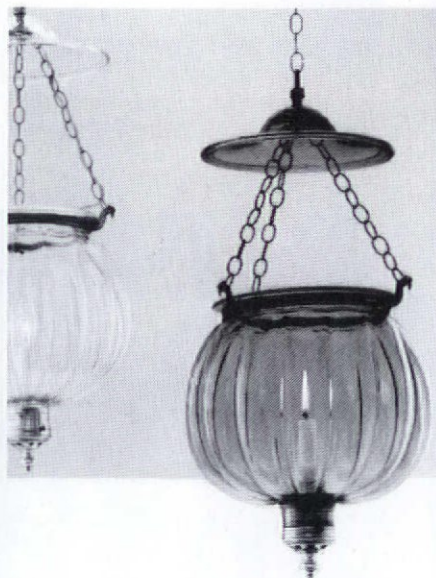
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ASK OHJ

Colonial Revival

Q I'd like to know what style my house is. The front is clapboard with wood corner pilasters; the sides are brick. It was constructed in 1939. (The plasterer wrote his name in each wall as he finished it — that's how I know the year.)

— George B. Wilkinson
Melrose, Mass.

A Your post-Victorian Colonial Revival house is an unusually "pure" adaptation of the Federal or American Adam style that was popular between 1780 and 1820 or so. The style was common in coastal

Massachusetts, so it's not surprising to find it revived there.

The massing of the house — horizontal, with a low hipped roof — is a common Georgian type. Indeed, the Adam style (named for England's Adam brothers, influential architects of the period) is a refinement of the Georgian. Its distinguishing characteristics include the pilasters, fanlight over the door, classical entry arch and denticulated pediment, all nicely handled on your home. Multi-paned windows — six over six, nine over nine, even twelve over twelve — were common in the original examples. Your windows are a giveaway to the 1939 date: They're wide, and the



George Wilkinson's Colonial Revival house.

Photo courtesy: HABS



The precedent: An 18th-century Adam house.

15-over-15-light sash is perhaps a flourish.

Clapboard Question

Q I am going to build a house as close to an 1890 Victorian as I can. Should I use old or new clapboards? I have a source for 2" or 4" clapboards (salvaged from old houses). Did they use such clapboards on 1890 Victorians? Would this be feasible to use on new construction? My contractor said there is 4" siding available in some type of sheets. I would like to use original material if possible and practical.

— Debbie Cornell
Omaha, Nebraska

A We can't see your house, so we can offer only some general comments on your clapboard questions.

Recycled clapboard can be used on a new house, provided the salvage you find is in good shape, priced reasonably, and of sufficient quantity to do the entire building (or at least complete walls). Mixing and matching new and old siding would look too obvious and ruin the period effect gained by using antique materials.

Four-inch exposure siding would be appropriate for a Victorian-era building; smaller stock is usually associated with an earlier era.

A Stain Story

Q We have a question regarding the mahogany red stain in furniture. Several years ago, I used a solution of wood bleach which contained sodium hypochlorite to remove this type of stain. It was a one-part solution that was applied to the piece, which was then left out in the sun.

This year, I found the same company selling their product in two bottles. It had sat on the shelf for a long while and did not really do the job. I'm wondering if the solution is not

stable for a long period of time. (One bottle contained sodium hydroxide; the second solution to apply was a hydrogen peroxide.)

A hardware store sold me oxalic acid to use as a wood bleach. I could see that it worked some. I have also used a household bleach.

How do you recommend handling mahogany stain, an aniline dye? Also, do you have any data as to when this stain was used, and what types of wood it was applied to?

— Bertlyn Johnston
Ames, Iowa

A Furniture refinishing is as much an art as a science; as such, it's hard to predict the success of any one method. You'll have to experiment to find the best bleach for your project. With this in mind, we offer the following comments.

Not all wood stains and dyes respond to bleaching, and not all wood bleaches have an identical effect on the same stain or dye. The sodium hypochlorite you used (the same chemical as Clorox Bleach) often does work well on aniline dyes. The sodium hydroxide (caustic soda) and hydrogen peroxide treatment may have been less successful because 1) the hydrogen peroxide had lost its potency (it spoils easily and has a limited shelf life), or 2) it simply doesn't lighten that stain well. Oxalic acid is a fair bleach, but must be used very warm and very concentrated to be effective. It also must be neutralized with a base solution (caustic), or the subsequent finish might be affected.

Aniline dyes were invented in the mid-1800s, and have been in production in Europe and America for over 100 years.

We have a reference from 1908 which says that cherry, birch, and pine (and sometimes basswood and sycamore) were the woods commonly stained to imitate mahogany. Mahogany itself takes a finish beautifully and was rarely stained.

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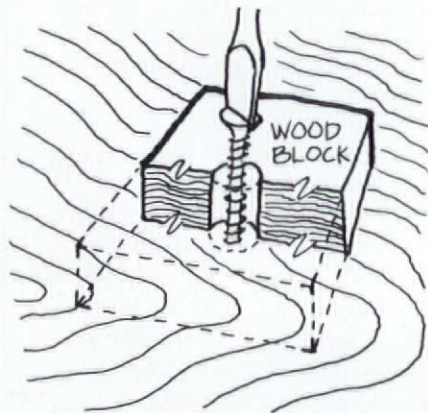
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Block That Screw

Having just watched someone use an electric screw gun, I think it's time to reissue an old but still useful trick. This person was attempting to drive screws at a slight angle and was chewing the wood around the head, as the bit slipped repeatedly. Finally, I couldn't stand it anymore and shared some ways to tame the holes.

For screws: Take a scrap of wood about 4" square (plywood is fine) and drill a hole in it which will just pass the screwhead. Start the screw carefully and drop the block over it; if your driver should slip off the head, the block will be scarred rather than the work. I use this with my big Yankee spiral driver, and it works as well with any form of screwdriver.



Sometimes it becomes necessary to enlarge a pipe or wire hole or, worse yet, move it a half-diameter or less; there's no support for the center point, and the drill or hole-saw wanders around, scarring the wood badly. Back to the block! Drill a hole in it, using the drill or hole-saw needed, and clamp or screw it to the work where the hole is required. It will serve as a guide, placing the tool exactly where it's wanted without any fight.

— Michael P. Lawton
Port Townsend, Wash.

No More Crud

Like many older homes, my 1908-vintage Craftsman Bungalow has galva-

nized-iron water pipes that have become partly blocked with calcium deposits over the years — especially the hot-water lines.

Recently, I had to replace a small section of pipe which had become badly corroded where it joined the flexible coupling leading from the water heater. In the process, I dislodged some of the crud inside the hot-water line, which had migrated "downstream" until it had gotten stuck and almost completely blocked the hot-water flow to our kitchen sink. I needed to back-flush the hot-water pipe to get all those loose calcium chips out . . . or else face a major plumbing bill.

First, I took the filter off the single-spigot kitchen faucet and replaced the regular washer with a *solid*-rubber washer, so that the water flow was completely blocked. I shut off the hot-water line at the heater, opened a union joint in the blocked hot-water line near the heater, and placed a plastic trash can under the open joint. Then I turned on the kitchen faucet with the faucet handle midway between hot and cold. Water flowed "in" the cold-water line, through the valve, and back "out" the hot-water line. I let it run for about five minutes, and it flushed out quite an accumulation of crud into the waiting trash can. When I reconnected the union joint, the kitchen sink had a better hot-water flow than at any time since we bought the house.

This back-flushing process could be used with any water line terminating in a single-spigot faucet that has a filter. Anyone planning to flush a cold-water line using the hot-water line as a water source, however, should first shut off the water heater and let it cool.

— Lewis M. Phelps
Pasadena, Calif.

More on Pigeons

It was with some dismay that I read the tip from James B. Tyler in the

July/August OHJ ["Pigeon Problems," p. 18], about how to keep pigeons from nesting on old houses. Although I sympathize with the *problem*, I question that method.

Placing a brick outside the bedroom window may be humane to the birds, but it could be lethal to pedestrians during an earth tremor. As a fellow San Franciscan, Mr. Tyler should be aware that even the smallest tremor can shake loose objects from the facades of houses. A brick balanced on end on a window ledge could easily become dislodged.

This is not only an earthquake problem. People who live in areas where earthquakes are not common still have high winds, rain, and snow to contend with.

The method can work, as long as homeowners secure the brick to the building so that it cannot move. I would suggest placing a strong anchor bolt in the ledge and lashing the brick to it with wire, making sure the brick cannot move in any direction. True, this is additional work, but well worth it in terms of the peace of mind which will come from knowing that you aren't about to brain the mail-carrier.

— Dmitri Belser
San Francisco, Cal.

After reading "Pigeon Problems," I was prompted to write you our solution: Another sure-fire way to keep pigeons from coming back to roost or nest in your eaves is to put mothballs in some sort of cloth — we use old socks — and tack the cloth to your problem area. First you must clean the area with ammonia or other good cleaner to get rid of the old familiar smells. Like the brick idea, this makes for an unfamiliar sight; plus, the smell of the mothballs seems to help. You can use socks similar in color to that part of the house. We change our socks once a year.

— Lucy Burnett
Wichita, Kansas

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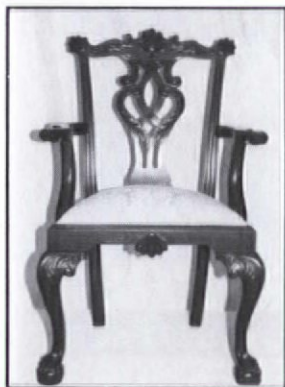


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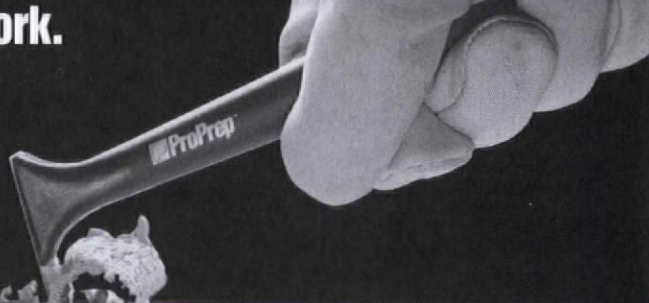
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BATHROOM FIXTURES

Stories about a manufacturing giant reveal
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by Gary Moffat

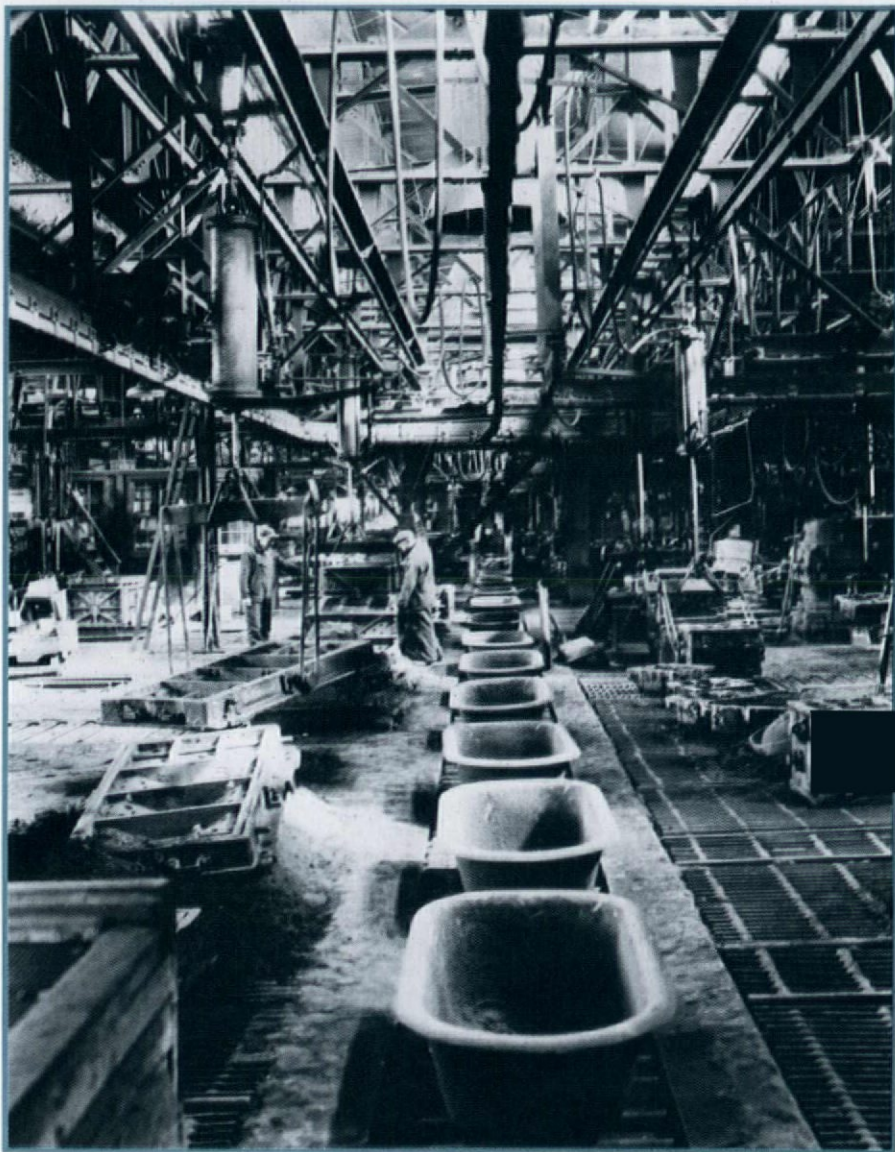
In 1873, Austrian-born John Michael Kohler and two other Sheboygan-area businessmen became partners. Their fledgling firm was an iron and steel foundry that produced farm implements, hitching posts, cemetery crosses, porch railings, and other wrought items. The company also made pig scalders — large iron tubs used in processing freshly killed hogs. After water was boiled in the scalders, the pigs were immersed so that the body hair could be scraped off efficiently.

A decade later (1883), with some 65 employees on the payroll, the Kohler company backed into the plumbing-fixture business. They adapted their pig scalders for use as bathtubs by simply enameling the iron tub and affixing four iron legs. An upgraded version could be had by ordering the optional wooden trim. According to a company history, the scalders were marketed for dual purposes because Kohler, in his first foray into the indoor-plumbing market, did not have the resources to invest in new tub patterns.

With operations located in the middle of farm country, it's not surprising that Kohler lore also has it that the first tub went to a farmer. The deal netted one cow and fourteen chickens. But the real market Kohler aimed at was not the farmer in need of a Saturday night bath; it was the swelling tide of immigrants who considered cleanliness as necessary as food and shelter.

In the same year, the company introduced its first line of kitchen sinks: flat-rim models ranging in size from about a foot square to 20-by-40 inches. Starting price was \$2.40. Within just four years, 70% of the firm's revenues would be attributed to the sale of plumbing fixtures and enameled products.

By 1901, John Kohler had died, and his son Walter had taken control of a company heavily involved in the manufacture of enameled products. In addition to producing pedestal lavatories, high-tank toilets, urinals, and drinking fountains, the Kohler Company had developed an innovative one-piece lavatory and one-piece kitchen sink (complete with backsplash and drainboard).



Newly cast tubs march across Kohler's foundry floor in the mid-1920s.

In 1911, Kohler irrefutably established itself as a technological trendsetter by designing a built-in bathtub. About this time it became fashionable to install tubs neatly in alcoves as an option to conventional free-standing units. To accommodate such spaces, tubs were cast in two separate pieces (basin and apron), and then the plumber welded the sections together on the job. The apron extended from the top edge of the basin to the floor and to each wall of the alcove, effectively screening the water and drain pipes from view (as well as eliminating the problem of cleaning under the tub.) While this approach worked, the seam where the roll edge of the tub joined the apron was unsightly and it was difficult to keep clean.



A c. 1890 toilet in the Kohler Museum. In period bathrooms, the wooden tank was wall-mounted.



From the 1890s, a typical late-Victorian bathroom with a wood-rimmed tub and lots of woodwork.

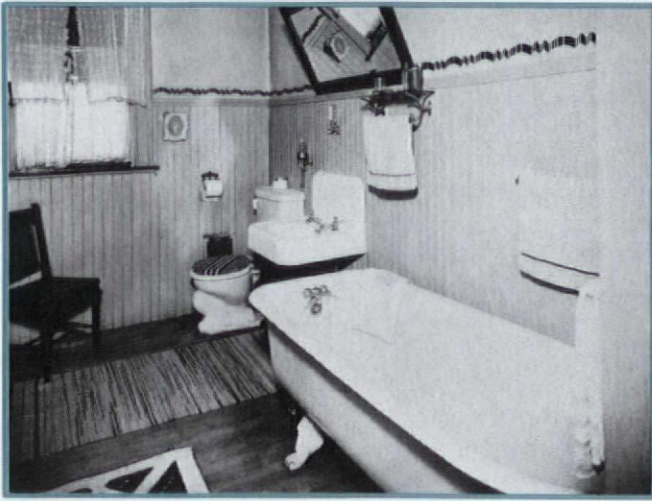
Kohler solved these aesthetic and sanitary problems by fabricating a built-in unit where the tub basin and apron were cast in a single piece. This theme was extended in a corner tub with two sides flush to the wall and two sides with aprons extending to the floor. In both the corner and alcove approaches, a tile flange was provided so that the area surrounding the tub could be finished in ceramics. This Kohler innovation served as the blueprint for tub design as we know it today.

The decade following World War I was one of prosperity and more innovations from Kohler. Vitreous china products — primarily toilets and lavatories — were added to an already burgeoning line of cast-iron fixtures. While this move (in combination with hardware offerings such as showerheads and faucets) made Kohler a legitimate full-line supplier, another technological first one-upped and astounded the competition: In 1927, Kohler engineers perfected a method to match the colors of vitreous china and cast-iron fixtures. Individual colored fixtures had been available earlier, but the bathroom palette was still limited to white, because (1) white was considered sanitary; (2) no manufacturer had been able to produce identical colors in two materials of such dissimilar nature as china and enamelled cast iron. Now consumers could select tubs, lavatories, and toilets in the Kohler hues of Spring Green, Lavender, Autumn Brown, Old Ivory, and Horizon Blue — years before the “breakthrough” pinks and greys of the 1950s.

The introduction of color gave Kohler the lead in creativity, and the company was quick to open the field to manufacturers of other bathroom-decorating elements — tile, fabrics, accessories. They were invited to develop products that coordinated with Kohler’s colors. The result was a new emphasis on making the bathroom a pleasant part of the home.

Formal recognition of Kohler’s achievements came at the end of the 1920s, when two of the company’s products were selected for an exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Ely Jacques Kahn, a leading architect of the day, created a stunning Art Deco design room using Kohler products. The spacious combination bath-and-dressing room used a dramatic mix of color and materials. Black and pink tiles were teamed with lots of chrome and mirrors, an unusual silverleaf ceiling treatment, and indirect lighting. The room featured built-in storage, concealed laundry chutes, and lounge furniture — a clear announcement that one was expected to spend time in the luxuriously appointed room.

Kohler’s contributions to Kahn’s masterstroke included products from its regular line: a Universal bath and a Deauville lavatory in Jet Black. Both were equipped with chrome faucets and fittings from the company’s Cellini collection. According to a report in a Kohler newsletter, the exhibition was jammed with thousands of visitors when it opened in 1929. While the critics raved, the innovations never really took hold in the American mainstream: The Great Depression halted new-home construction and novel approaches to design along with it.



This turn-of-the-century bathroom still has tongue-and-groove boards and a wood floor instead of tiles.

Safety in the bathroom is a prominent issue in modern bathrooms. Go back to 1931, and you'll find the topic was already a concern to Kohler designers. In that year, the company introduced metal hand grips that mounted to the wall, to assist in getting in and out of the tub. By 1935, the company offered a bath/showering unit with a built-in seat especially for use by the elderly, the obese, and children.

The fiberglass materials used in modern plumbing fixtures have created a market for "soft" fixture cleansers. In this light, Kohler appears way ahead of its time when, in 1939, it introduced its own scratch-resistant cleanser. Company literature explains that in addition to vitreous and enameled fixtures, the product was recommended for glass, tile, marble, and pots and pans.


More than 100 years after its founding, Kohler survives as a family-owned enterprise, still headquartered in its company-built town of Kohler, Wisconsin. What of its products today? Well, Kohler is not a "reproduction fixtures" company. They do not carry a line of historically accurate replacement fixtures for old-house baths. But they do manufacture a few products inspired by the past:

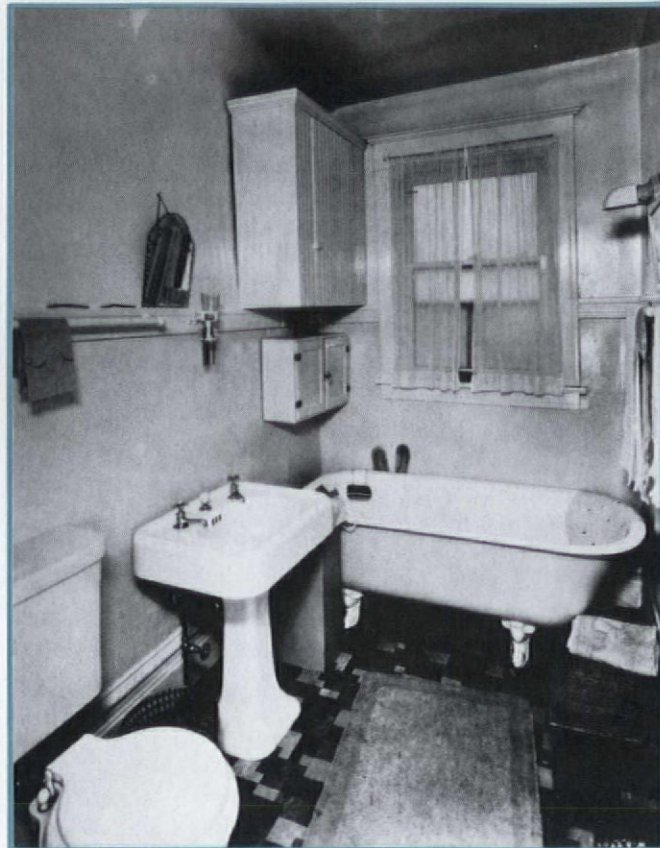
☞ The "Birthday Bath," a ball and claw foot tub with exposed water supply and drain pipes. Produced to commemorate the company's 100th birthday, it is a high-style, new-old design available in red, black, almond, parchment, and white.

☞ The "Vintage Toilet," a pull-chain, overhead-tank commode (also not true to original designs). It is nostalgic, though, with the tank and toilet seat both available in solid oak.

☞ The "Antique Series" of faucets "capture the magic of traditional design," says the Kohler catalog. That may be true, but they would look funny in a real Victorian bath.

☞ "Console Table" sinks are newer versions of a sink design that achieved great popularity in the 1920s.

The firm also makes a good corner sink that would serve admirably in the right project. Check out their institutional (hospital, lab, and school) product lines, too: Many of the offerings have old-fashioned, no-nonsense design. 



One-piece built-in bathtubs were still to come when this photo was taken c. 1910.



A contemporary Kohler "console table" sink with 1920s IV Georges legs.

"WHEN DID THEY INVENT THE DISHWASHER?"

Not all of Kohler's inspirations were instant winners. In 1926, for example, Kohler introduced its Electric Sink, a labor-saving device that was just slightly ahead of its time. A wall-hung sink with integral backsplash, side drainboard, and basin, this model also had a deep basin for automatically washing dishes. This second basin featured racks to hold dishes and a center spraying device powered by an electric motor. You had simply to load the racks, add water, lower the stainless-steel cover, and push the button. (So who says you can't have a dishwasher in your re-creation of a mid-'20s kitchen?)

Advertisements promoting the Electric Sink in such publications as *Ladies' Home Journal* appealed to liberated electric-'twenties housewives. "Every clever woman has wondered, rebelliously and often, whether the dishes would *always* have to be washed by hand," one ad began. "Now is the time . . . a servant's wage for a few months — that's all it means," promised another.

Nice try. But it would be another 30 years before electric dishwashers would earn the acceptance of American families.



July, 1927 LADIES' HOME JOURNAL.



A lifelong servant—yours for no more than a servant's wage for a few months

The KOHLER ELECTRIC SINK

It is economy to pay money for some luxuries. The Kohler Electric Sink is an economy. It does effortlessly, three times a day and year after year, a task that by the old way of doing costs physical fatigue, and mental weariness, and money, and time worth more than money.

Every woman knows the cost. And no American woman, in these "Electric Twenties," intends to keep on paying that cost forever. The Kohler Electric Sink is here. Now is the time

to stop paying tribute to the tyrant of the dishpan.

The Kohler Electric Sink washes dishes shining clean, as you would wash them. It rescues hands from harshening dishwater; saves precious china from old-time hazards of breaking and chipping. Then, its easy task completed, it becomes the best of all sinks for every other use, ahead of its day in features of practical convenience.

Ask your plumber about buying the

Kohler Electric Sink on convenient payments—installation cost included. A servant's wage for a few months—that's all it means. The coupon will bring more information about this and other fine Kohler fixtures for modern homes.

KOHLER CO., Kohler, Wis.
Certificates, Please send descriptive literature as checked. Kohler Electric Sink
 Other Kohler Plumbing Fixtures

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____

KOHLER CO., Founded 1873, KOHLER, WIS. • Shipping Point, Sheboygan, Wis. • BRANCHES IN PRINCIPAL CITIES

KOHLER OF KOHLER

Plumbing Fixtures

KOHLER VILLAGE & A BATHROOM MUSEUM

I saw examples of the Electric Sink — models in white and green — in a museum of plumbing fixtures at Kohler's Design Center, a 36,000-square-foot showcase in Kohler, Wisconsin. On display are products ranging from an 1890 commode with wooden tank, to several examples of the company's early shower-baths. (The big draw, however, is the exhibition of *modern* products, testimony that Kohler is still an innovator. Shown are limited-edition lavatories and toilets by ceramic artists, huge whirlpool spas, and luxurious, expensive environmental enclosures.)

The other reason to visit is Kohler Village, the planned community built before the turn of the century just west

of Sheboygan. The Kohler family, with consultation from Frederick Law Olmsted of Central Park fame, designed a town for his own Utopian society (not an unusual concept for the day). Workers owned their own homes and the company supplied everything else. Company towns are another subject entirely, so suffice it to say that, unlike many others, Kohler's was humane and on many levels successful. It still functions today.

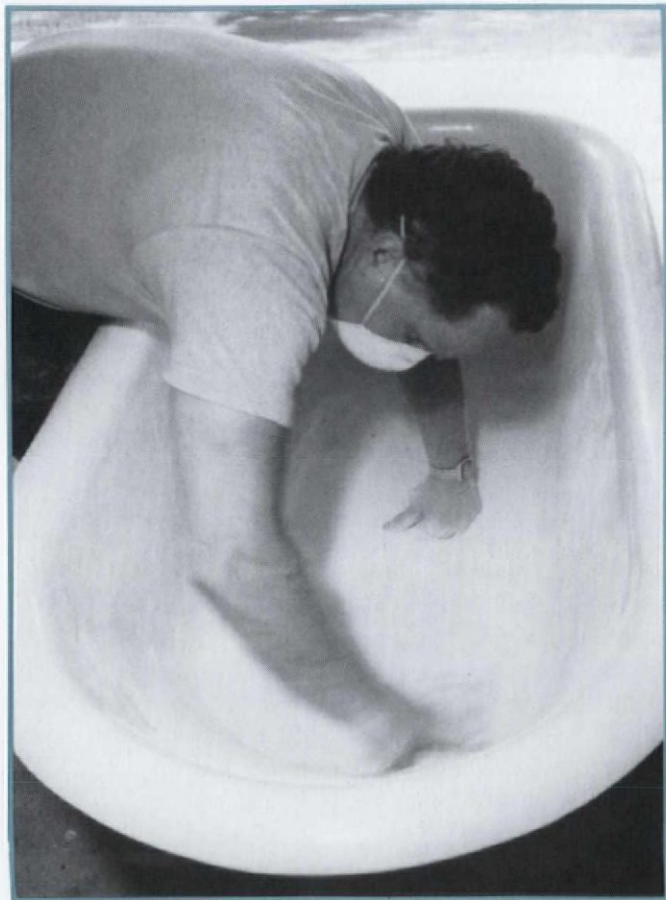


Call toll free for more information: 1-800-#4-KOHLER or write Consumer Products Marketing, Kohler Company, Kohler WI 53044. The company provides extensive product-line books at a fee; inquire about your specific area of interest.

REFINISHING BATHROOM FIXTURES DOES IT WORK AND SHOULD YOU BOTHER

by Bill O'Donnell

One person's trash is another's treasure: salvaged tubs await re-finishing — and status as antiques.



One part of the cleaning step: Al Fontaine wet-sands the tub with 600-grit sandpaper.

Refinishing a bathroom fixture does carry some risk of failure. So if your antique tub is only slightly chipped or stained, our best advice is to clean it up and live with its imperfections. There does come a time, of course, when porcelain-enameled fixtures have worn out. The choice then is whether to buy a reproduction fixture, or have the existing sink or tub refinished. This is absolutely not a do-it-yourself proposition; we're talking about professional "reglazing" using polyurethane-based coatings.

Bathtub refinishing has gotten a lot of bad press, much of it deserved. Ten or fifteen years ago, site-mixed two-part epoxy paints were used; these failed more often than was tolerable. Fly-by-night contractors sprang up, painted a lot of tubs, took the money, and left town before the new finishes started to peel. Some of those contractors were downright fraudulent opportunists. Others were well-intentioned businesspeople who lacked either expertise or proper materials.

Today, you *can* find well-trained, reputable contractors who use high-tech coatings to produce long-lasting finishes on old fixtures. While the process does have its limitations — paint doesn't perform like porcelain — you can expect to get a finish that will last ten years or more.

Remember what you're buying, however. Fixture refinishing is a painting process. Even if the name of the product includes words like glass, glazing, porcelain or enamel, it's still paint. (We're often asked if it's possible to have a fixture reporelained and refired. In practice, we know of no such service.)

Refinishing lets you get fancy, by the way. You can choose almost any color or you can have the fixture polychromed or stencilled.

THE COST

If you have an irreplaceable, one-of-a-kind fixture, the choice is clear: Have it refinished. Refinishing is sensible, too, if replacing the fixture would mean ripping up the whole bathroom. But if you have a more pedestrian piece, like a standard pedestal sink, consider buying a reproduction. A reproduction pedestal sink can be had for about \$450 (and lasts 40+ years). Refinishing an old one costs \$150 (and lasts 10-15 years). A clawfoot tub sells for about \$1500 brand new. You can have the old one refinished for about \$450.

Of course, a new fixture will last longer than a refinished one. On the other hand, a new fixture may have attendant plumbing and tilework costs. When getting bids, please remember that you get what you pay for. If someone offers to paint your tub for fifty bucks, it will look great only until you fill it with water.

THE PROCESS

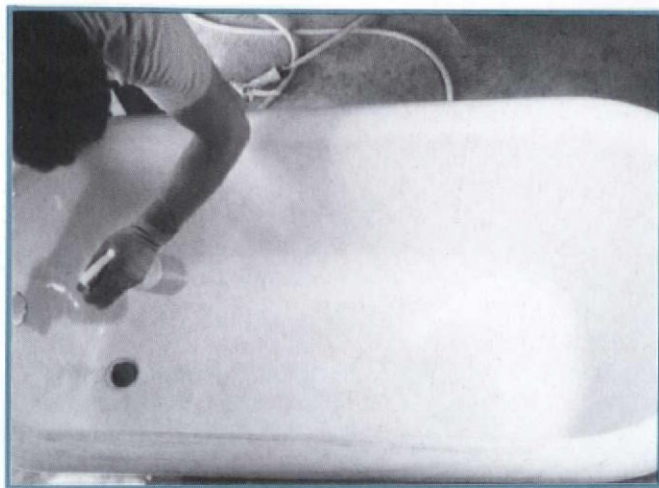
Most professional refinishers offer both on-site and in-shop service. If you're doing a major bathroom remodeling project, the contractor will advise you to remove the fixtures for refinishing in the shop. A shop environment is more controlled than your bathroom. Dust can be kept to a minimum, temperature and humidity set, the cat won't wander in. . . . Also, the contractor won't have to mask or clean up — but you'll save money only if *you* can haul the fixture to and from the shop.

There are two basic processes used by national refinishing services. The only major difference is in how the paint is bonded to the surface. **Acid etching** creates a mechanical bond between the porcelain and the new coating. **Chemical bonding**, as the name suggests, uses a bonding agent that chemically connects the new coating to the porcelain. Cleaning, filling, sanding, painting, and polishing are all done in the same way for both processes.

The refinishers will disconnect all fittings and plumbing connections so that there will be a continuous coating on the fixture. (Painting around fittings would leave an edge — and that's where the coating could begin to fail.) A good scrubbing with a commercial detergent removes all surface oils and soapy residue. Then a wash with a proprietary phosphoric-acid cleaner removes scale and rust stains. The acid is often applied with 100-grit wet-or-dry sandpaper to make rust removal faster. The fixture is then rinsed with clear water, followed by an acetone wash. Finally, the fixture is allowed to dry thoroughly.

Once the piece is clean, nicks, gouges, and scratches are filled in and sanded smooth. This procedure is much like auto-body repair. Damaged areas are sanded with coarse sandpaper to rough up the surface to provide keying for the filler. A fiber filler is applied to the imperfections with a Teflon applicator, then wet-sanded smooth with a progression of grits once it sets up.

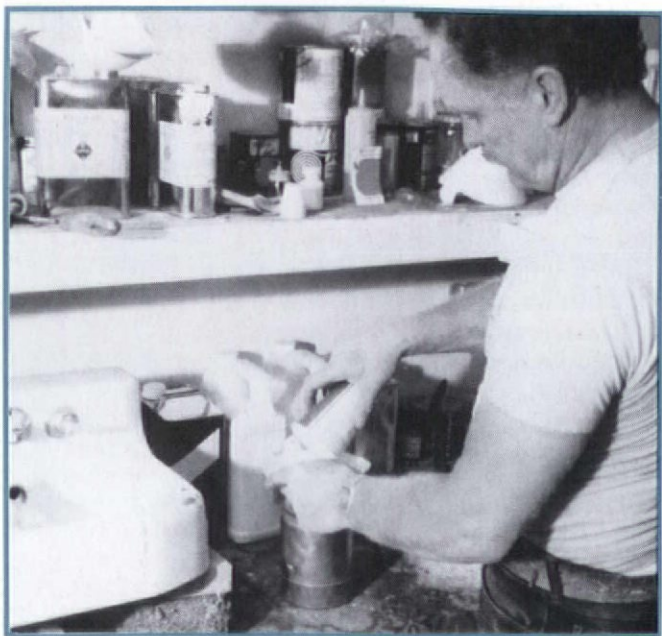
At this point the procedure differs depending on whether the contractor is using acid etching or chemical



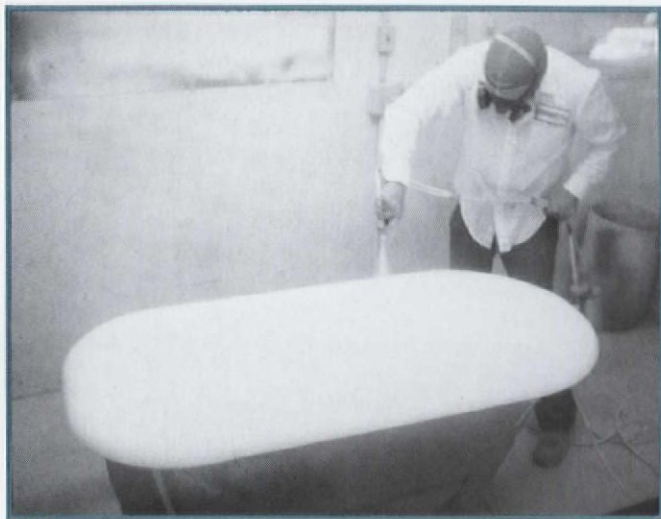
Phosphoric-acid cleanser in the spray bottle removes discoloration from superficial rusting.



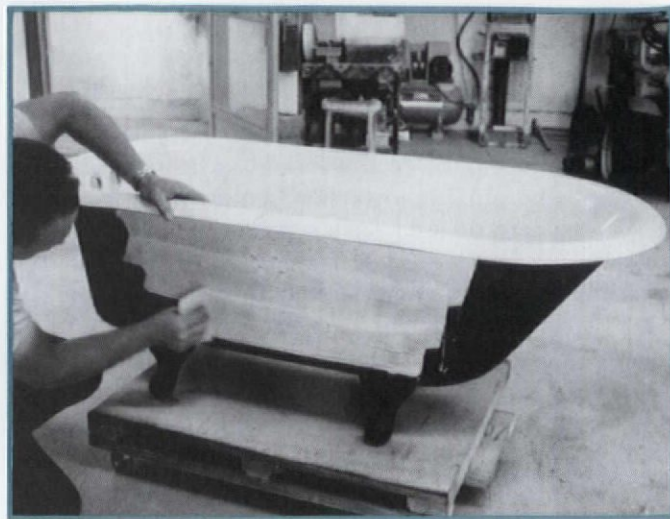
Nicks and scratches are filled with a fiber filler. This task requires skill, especially around the drain opening.



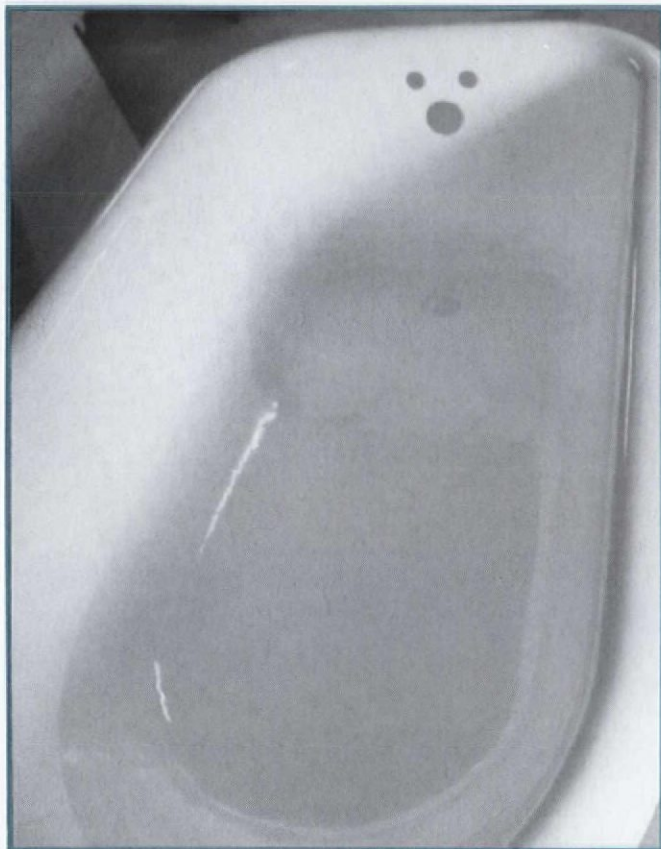
The two-part (resin and catalyst) polyurethane-based coating is mixed prior to spraying.



Polyurethane paint is sprayed on the carefully prepared tub in several applications.



Outsides are typically rough-cast and pitted — but they can be skim-coated.



The tub interior is glossy after spraying. Dust and hairs must still be rubbed out with a compound.

bonding to promote adhesion of the new coating. With the acid-etching technique, the fixture receives a hydrofluoric-acid wash. The HF etches the surface of the porcelain to allow the new coating to mechanically bond to the porcelain. With the chemical-bonding technique, the refinisher applies a liquid bonding agent.

After this painstaking preparation, the refinisher uses a spray gun to apply several coats of a high-gloss, polyurethane-based finish. Frequently, an infrared heat lamp is

used to speed curing of the new coating. Once the finish has completely cured, dust particles and other foreign material are polished out of the surface by wet-sanding with 1200-grit sandpaper, followed by polishing with rubbing compound. (If the environment was especially dusty, it may be necessary for the contractor to start with 600- or even 400-grit wet-or-dry paper during polishing.)

FINDING A REPUTABLE OUTFIT

As stated, you can get an attractive, relatively long-lasting finish with either the acid-etching or chemical-bonding technique. Similarly, a sloppy, short-lived finish may be the result of either method. It all depends on the diligence and experience of the refinisher.

Look for a firm that has been in business (in one location) for some years. Ask for references and check them out. Get names of customers who had fixtures redone more than a year ago. Compare the warranties — some companies offer a one-year warranty, some will extend it up to five years. More important than length of warranty is their willingness to stand behind their work. Regardless of the contractor's experience, eventually the company will have a coating failure under warranty. If the contractor was willing to make good, you can feel confident that your money won't go down the drain. (See the box at the end of the article for a list of national chains.)

MAINTAINING THE FIXTURE

You cannot use Ajax or Comet on a refinished fixture. Those cleansers are quite abrasive and will wear away the coating in no time. Use a liquid bathroom cleaner like SoftScrub. When necessary, you can resort to a non-abrasive powder such as Bon Ami.

Don't worry that you won't be able to adequately clean the sink or tub. Refinished pieces have very smooth, high-gloss surfaces, and will clean up easily without any need of abrasive scrubbing.

NATIONWIDE SERVICES

There are many reputable, independently owned refinishing contractors in the Yellow Pages. Another place to start is with the companies listed below: They can give you the name of their authorized dealer nearest you. These local services are still independently owned, but they use the parent company's materials and methods, and have received training from the national chain.

Bathmasters International

1595 Miller Road
Imperial, MO 63052
(314) 464-3242

Dura Glaze

1114 Harpeth Industrial
Franklin, TN 37064
(615) 790-8827

Miracle Method

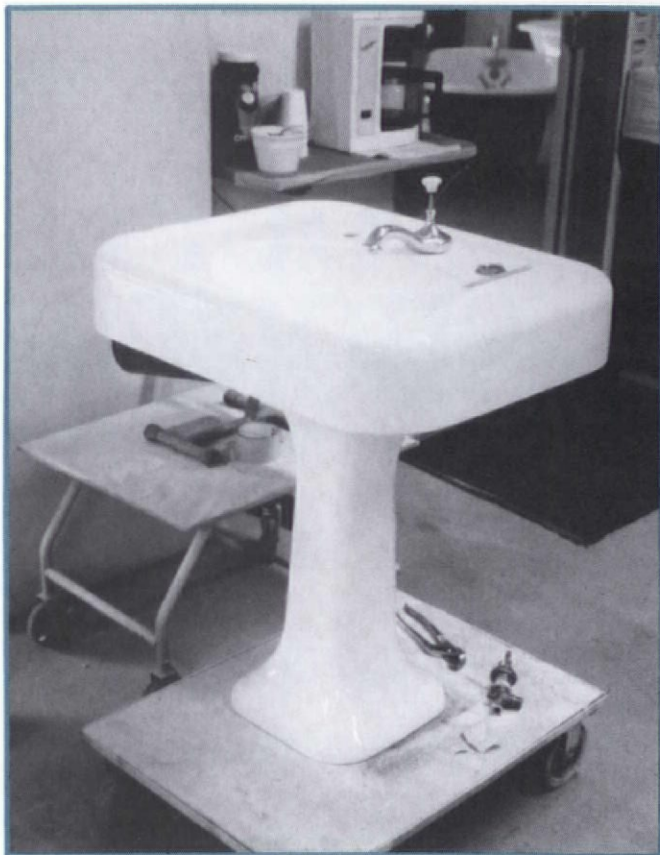
3740 Overland Avenue
Suite C
Los Angeles, CA 90034
(213) 204-5038

Perma Ceram

65 Smithtown Boulevard
Smithtown, NY 11787
(516) 724-1205

Perma Glaze

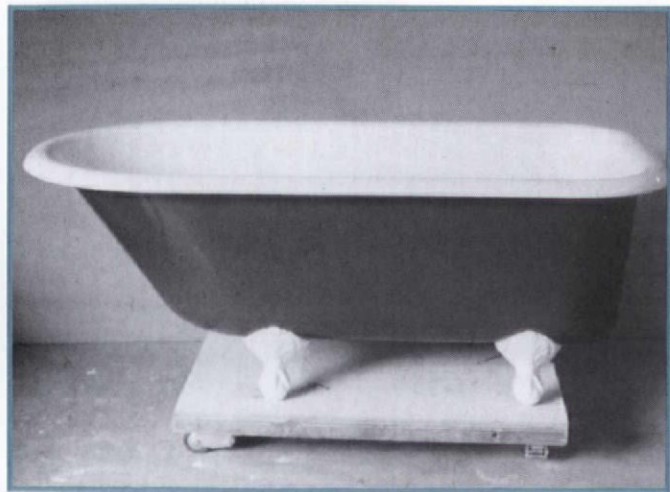
P.O. Box 18377
Tucson, AZ 85721
(602) 722-9718



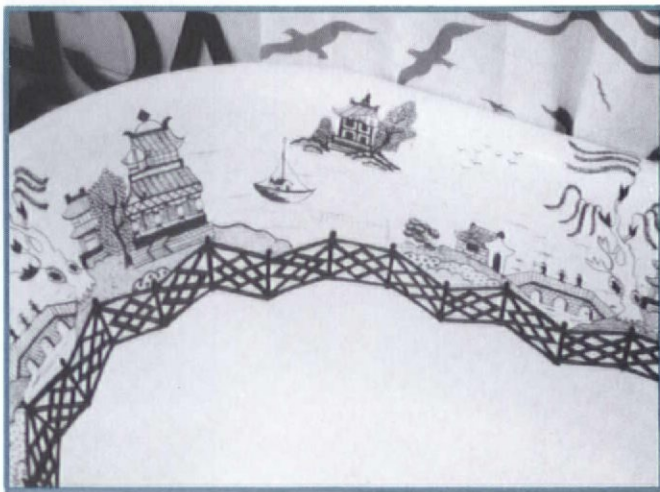
Pedestal sinks are a substantial part of the fixture refinishing business.

Many refinishing shops also sell reconditioned antique tubs and sinks. The big photo on page 22 shows bathtubs lounging in the sun behind the Fontaines' restoration shop. Al and Audrey have bad couples lie in each rusting tub — sometimes in designer clothes — to decide which one they want refinished.

Our thanks to the Fontaines for their help with photos. Their operation is Vintage Tub & Sink Restoration, 701 Center Street, Ludlow, MA 01056.



Finished tub: a blue exterior and glossy white inside. Some folks get extravagant and have the feet highlighted with gold leaf.



A hand-painted Blue Willow design was added to this antique tub during repainting. Fancy painting and colored "glaze" are refinishing options.

DUPLICATING SHORT MOULDING SECTIONS

by Gordon Bock

Every old house has short sections of wood moulding missing — and if your house didn't when you bought it, it will by the time the electricians and plumbers are through. Old moulding patterns are notoriously hard to find. The simplified profiles and reduced selection offered by modern millwork suppliers don't come near the variations in designs of the past. So what do you do when a short section is missing, and it's not worth paying cutter and setup charges for a minimum run?

Our first suggestion is steal it from your own house. Moulding that matches what's missing can probably be found along the baseboard stairs, in old or added closets, behind radiators, or in a room that needs extensive demolition anyway. Use the moulding from such areas to patch more conspicuous places. Then replace moulding in areas of secondary importance with rough or stock pieces.

Second tip: If you can purchase exact-match moulding from stock, do it. Even if you have to mail-order it from a specialty supplier, get it now while it's available. Precut, one-piece mouldings are easy

to install and the minimum order is probably reasonable.

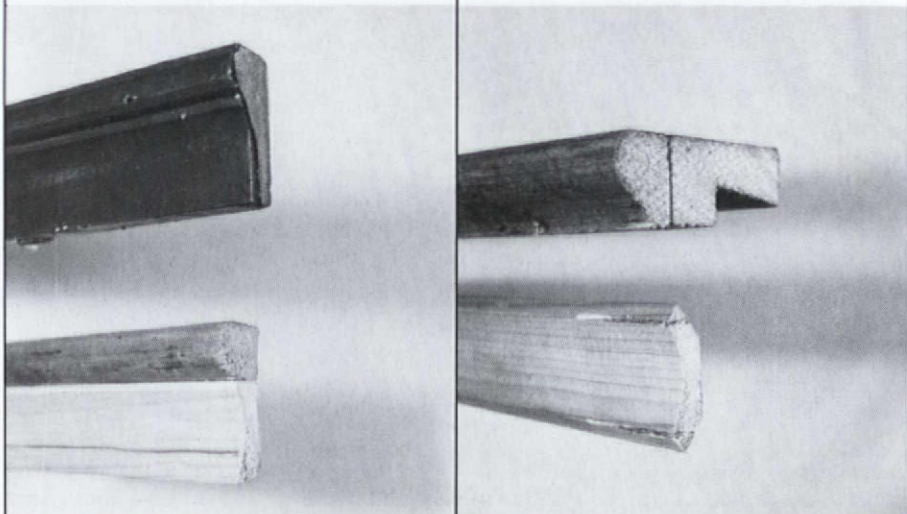
The third idea is to have it milled by custom order — again, to get an exact match and for ease of installation. (Installing mouldings built up from small pieces is labor intensive.) You will have to pay for a cutter (knife) plus setup charges; in most cases, a run of 200 feet is about the minimum to reasonably amortize those costs.

Our fourth and last solution is to make up the missing moulding yourself, at home, using ad-hoc carpentry techniques. This article provides tips on doing just that,

for sections of missing moulding six inches to a few feet long. We'll cover only interior wood mouldings: door and window casings, baseboard, picture rails, wood cornice, mantel pieces, etc.

PIECED MOULDINGS

Before we discuss building up profiles from separate pieces, let's mention that a profile can also be cut down from a scrap of larger moulding. Elaborate pieces of millwork, with their multiple contours, are one source to tap for replacement mouldings. It may be



Old chair rail could be built up from, say, sections of cut-down window stool and corner cove (above).

that one can be cut apart to obtain the more basic profile that you need.

Cutting down a moulding is a simple operation. Pencilled guidelines are seldom needed as the running edges and other margins of the desired profile are ideal. It's best to run it through a table saw to assure a clean cut. It's important to cut on the waste side of the desired moulding to avoid "eating up" the area you want.

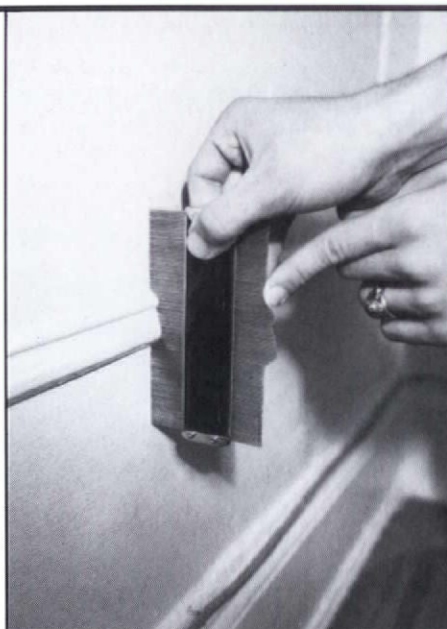
New stock from a lumberyard is fine, but leftovers from other projects work as well. Salvaged and discarded trim is a goldmine for hard-to-find profiles. Crown mouldings that bridge inside corners (such as those on ceilings) offer a good selection of contours because of their size. Mouldings can come from discarded woodwork, such as those around the raised panels of an old hardwood door.

Building up a particular moulding from basic shapes is a common carpentry technique in new work, and is also useful for short-length repairs. The "building blocks" can be whole pieces of stock moulding (if appropriate contours can be found), cut-down elements, or a combination of the two.

Don't use lots of little pieces. Use the largest profile you can. That will take less labor, and the grain will match. Before assembly, make sure the mating edges are true and accurate, then edge-glue and clamp. Generally, install moulding on the wall or ceiling as a single piece. Of course, if the original moulding was large and fastened in two or more sections, follow the same system now.

SHAPING PROFILES

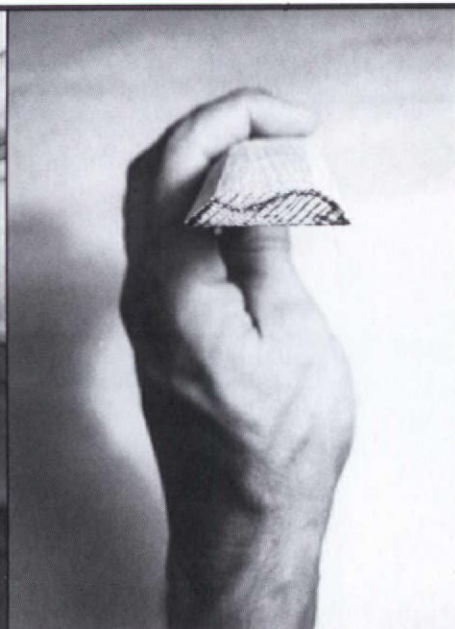
If you can't create the appropriate profile for your missing section by using scrap or stock moulding, you'll have to shape it. Useful tools for this project are a square, back or dovetail saw, hand plane, rabbet plane, and a contour gauge.



Using a contour gauge to map the moulding profile.

First, use the contour gauge to copy the profile of the moulding you want to duplicate. For the most faithful reproduction, hold the gauge perpendicular to the moulding as you copy, and help it read small contours by pushing the needles in by hand. Be sure to copy from an undamaged part of the moulding; strip off excess paint layers first, if need be. Transfer this outline to both ends of the new stock. (Choosing lumber with a cross section close to the dimensions of the new moulding saves effort in shaping. Having it longer than necessary makes it easier to clamp.)

Analyze the profile according to what parts of it are (1) flat or convex, and therefore can be planed down, and (2) those that are concave, and so must be rabbet-planed, sanded, filed, or gouged out.

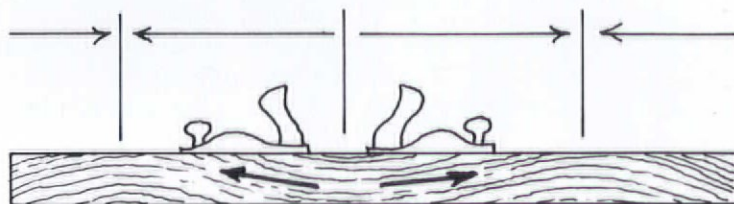
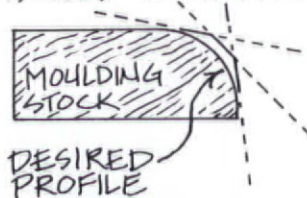


For a profile in square stock, plane straight and convex surfaces first.

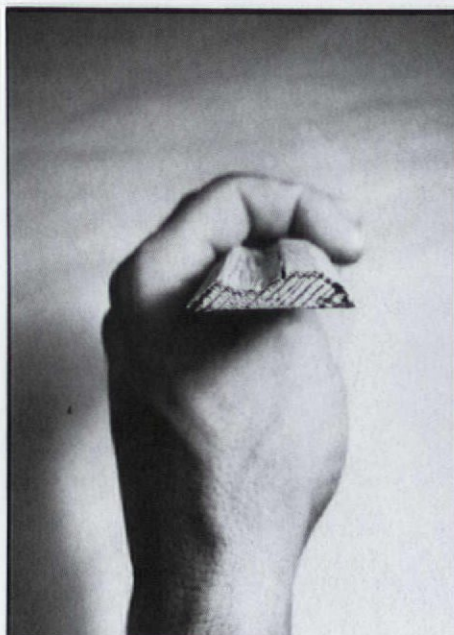
Planing is the first operation. Mark off guidelines down the length of the stock, using the most convenient parallel scribing method (see page 30). Then rough out the flat and convex surfaces. Square edges can be planed into round ones by repeatedly chamfering "corners." Three tips on planing:

- 1) Always work with a sharp blade.
- 2) Always plane "off the grain" for smooth results (see drawing).

PROFILE ROUGHED OUT BY SUCCESSIVE PASSES WITH PLANE



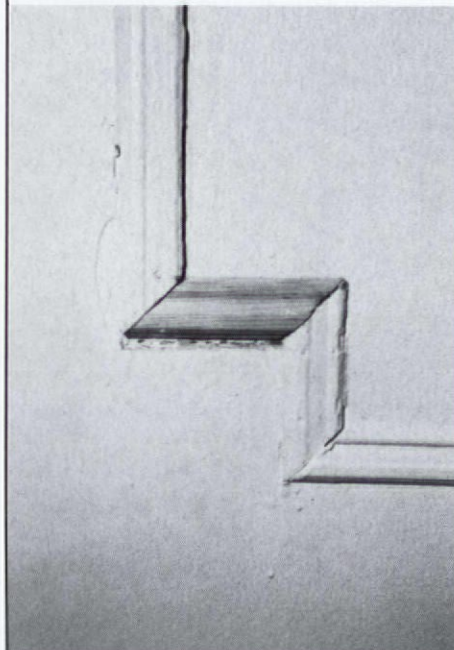
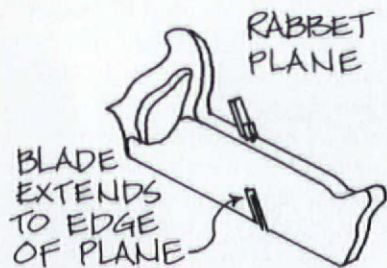
PLANE IN "UPHILL" DIRECTION ("OFF THE GRAIN")



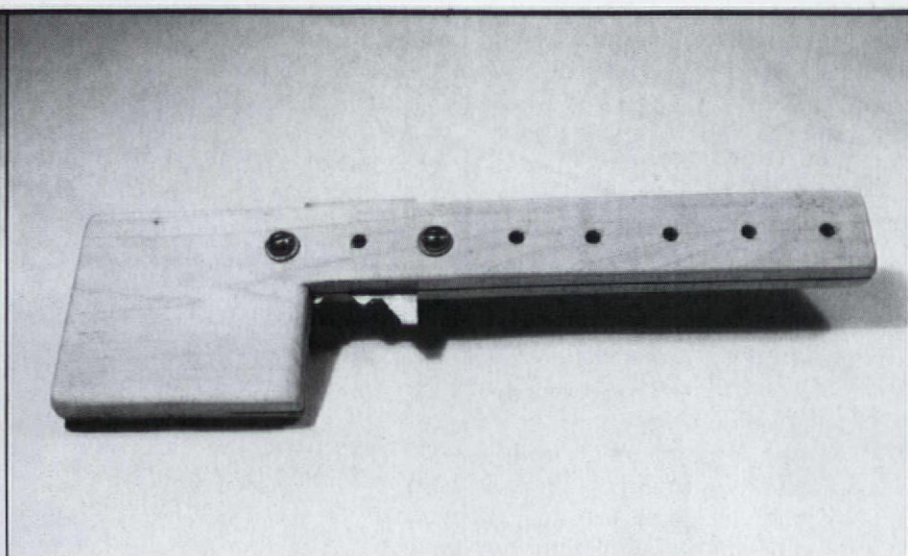
The roughed-out moulding piece is ready for sanding.

3) Planing into a bench stop (tacking down a thin wood scrap to the bench top will work) is sometimes more convenient than holding the work in a vise.

-After convex planing, concave



Here's the patch.



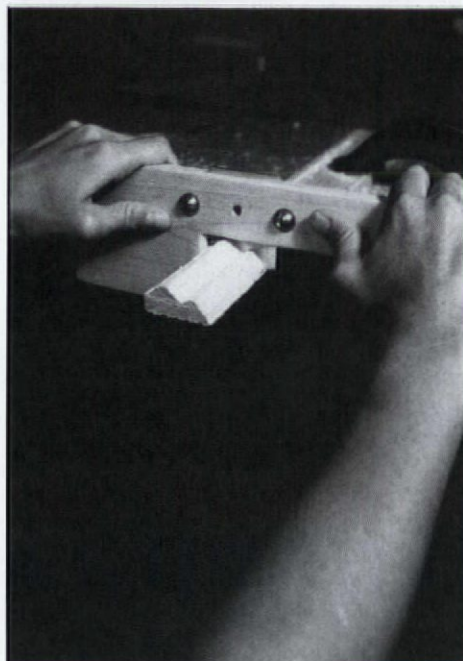
This homemade scratch-beader is $3\frac{1}{2} \times 13$ inches. The concept is similar to a cabinet scraper.

areas can be roughed out using a narrow rabbet plane. (Or use a convex moulding plane, if you have one.) Finish the profile with files and sandpaper wrapped around appropriate forms (dowels or straightedges).

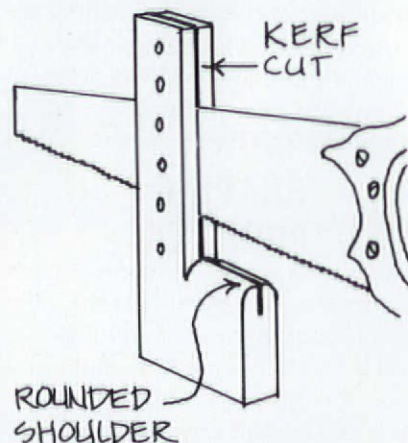
SCRATCH BEADING

A scratch beader is a versatile device, well adapted to making missing mouldings. Similar in principle to a cabinet scraper, it can easily do the work of a moulding plane or router, and is better adapted for many small jobs than these tools. It can cut any contour that can be ground or filed into a steel blade. It can also handle almost any width by making multiple passes with repositioned blades. In addition, rather than requiring a large investment in specialized bits or machinery, a scratch beader is an inexpensive tool, being made from scrap materials. It is also not difficult to use — easier, perhaps, than a plane (but only on fairly uncomplex, shallow profiles).

You can't buy a scratch beader in a store; it has to be made. The L-shaped holder can be any suitable hardwood (maple and oak work well) cut to convenient dimensions. It is kerfed down the blade arm, and partially into the



A homemade scratch-beader in action.



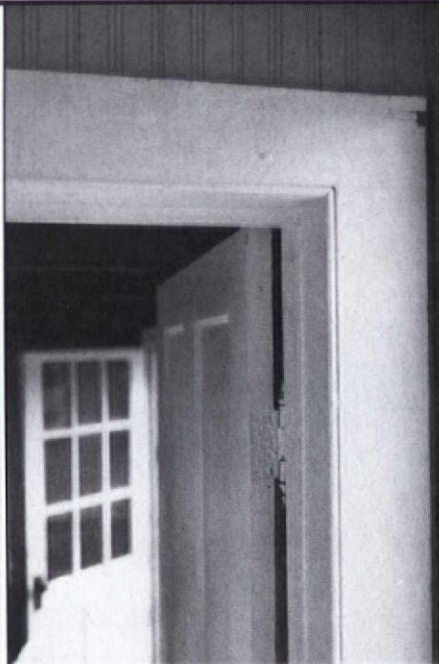
handle to accept the blade. Holes and bolts compress the holder and secure the blade. The riding edge has its corners rounded so that it can be used to create curved as well as straight mouldings.

The blade is made of steel no thicker than the kerf cut in the holder. Old saw blades, scraper blades, and scraps (with sufficient hardness to hold an edge) all are candidates. The blade blank is cut so it is long enough to extend through the holder arm, and then the negative profile of the desired moulding is ground or filed into one end. For blades with deeper contours, bulk amounts of waste steel can first be cut out with a hacksaw to streamline shaping the final profile.

The cutting edge should be close to perfectly square — not chisel-shaped like a plane. Technically, a slight angle of about five degrees is required, especially for thicker blade stocks. This lets the leading edge of the blade contact the work and do the cutting, rather than the back which would just ride without biting. When grinding or filing the profile, work into this cutting/leading edge (as when sharpening a knife or axe) to produce a sharp, burr-less finish.

Like any hand tool, using a scratch beader effectively takes a little muscle and some practice. To make moulding, draw the beader along the edge of the stock in repeated passes, so that the riding surface of the handle guides the tool along the edge of the stock (and at right angles). Some tips:

- ◇ Choose stock that is as straight-grained as possible.
- ◇ For the first cut or so, set the blade shallow (about $\frac{1}{16}$ th of an inch). Increase the blade gradually for successive cuts. This will keep the arm close to the work surface and help stabilize the tool.
- ◇ Keep the beader from chattering on the work by holding it firmly and bearing down gently.



Once ubiquitous, bead casing is easy to reproduce with a scratch-beader.

- ◇ Inspect the blade often and keep it clean of wood chips.
- ◇ Work "off the grain" here too, to let the blade shave a smooth finish without digging.
- ◇ Draw the beader right off the end of the work when scratching.
- ◇ Clean up "bumps" in the work with a chisel as soon as they appear.
- ◇ Sometimes it helps to angle the tool slightly into the direction of travel when starting a job.

Because its blade is made by hand, the scratch beader has at least two limitations. First, each of these cutters is unique, and cannot be sharpened without changing the profile. This means the beader is best used for individual projects, not for the production of many identical pieces. Second, the success of the new moulding depends largely on how well the blade is made, and this depends on the ability of the maker. With practice, one develops the knack for producing blades that cut well and make accurate mouldings, just as experience improves other woodworking skills.

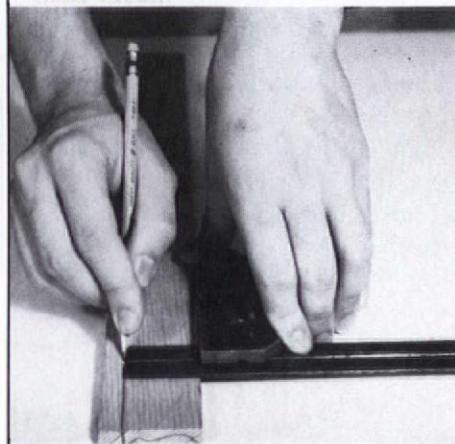
The advantages of scratch bead-ers are many. When armed with a good blade, they are capable of cutting both with and across the

grain without tearing the wood. This makes them excellent for creating curved mouldings (a task that is difficult with a router and impossible with a plane). They give the best results on hardwoods but, with care, also work well on softwoods. They can be made in any size that suits the scale of the project. They are very good at reproducing fine detail. In fact, the ideal assignment for a scratch beader is a novel or complicated bead-type moulding. Larger, coved mouldings are not out of the question, but they require removal of much more wood than a "quarter-rounded" surface, and therefore take more effort to produce. Naturally, scratch bead-ers are well adapted to any project that calls for a hand-made look.

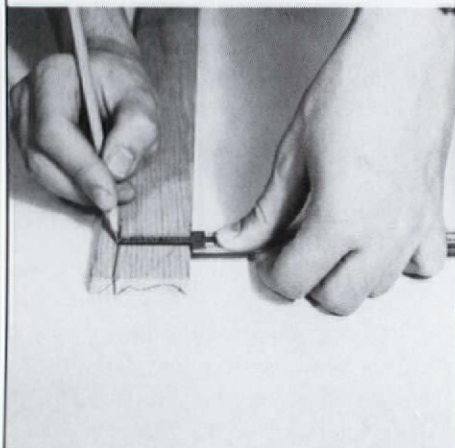
Scratch beading is actually an art. Furniture craftsmen have long used this technique to make delicate curved mouldings on chair arms and the edges of odd-shaped tables. Other artisans employ it to cut the recesses for decorative inlays. While that chunk of missing chair rail may be a lot homelier than a cabriole leg, it is still an important detail and a scratch beader can help restore it.

SIMPLE WAYS TO MARK AN EDGE

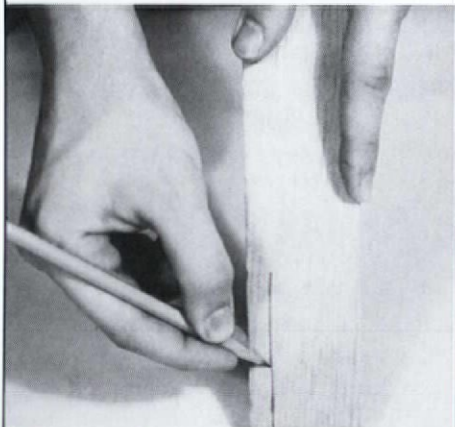
There are marking gauges made specifically for laying off lines parallel to a cut edge, but if you don't have one at your fingertips, here are three other ways to get the same result:



Combination Square — Combination squares are specifically designed to also function as gauges. The handle helps keep the ruler square on the work; better models supply small steel pins (housed in a hole in the handle) for times when you don't have a pencil.



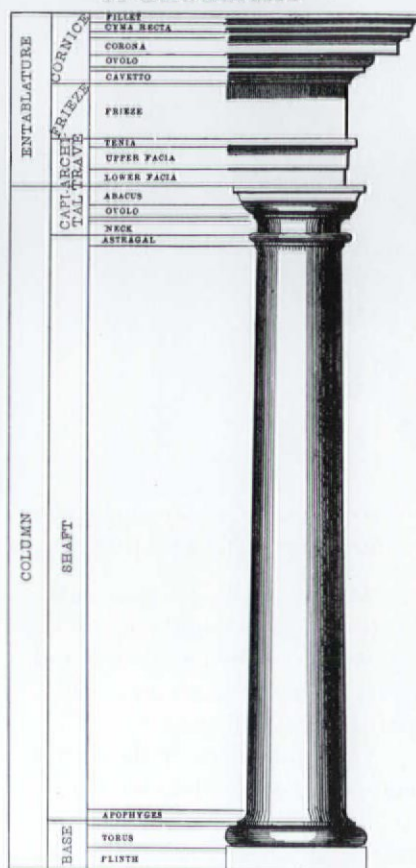
Folding Ruler — The extension scale of a folding ruler has been an all-purpose marking gauge for generations of carpenters. Be sure to hold it tight in the track and perpendicular to the stock edge when you draw the line.



Fingers Only — This technique is used in rough framing, where accuracy is not crucial. It shouldn't be used where an inexact edge could change the profile. The only tools needed are a pencil, and your hand as a marking tool. Hold the pencil in a normal manner with thumb and forefinger, but maneuver them so that the remaining three can be used to ride on the edge to which you are marking parallel. Watch for splinters.

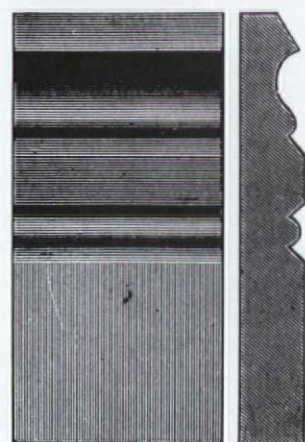
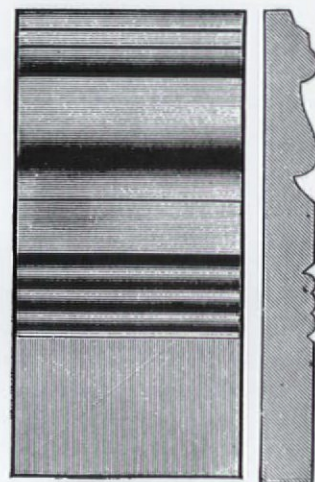
ELEMENTS OF MOULDINGS

A GLOSSARY



The family tree of most 18th-, 19th-, and 20th-century wood mouldings took root almost 2500 years ago with Classic Greek architecture. In their passion for design elements of perfect form and proportion, the Greeks evolved a vocabulary of moulded shapes for use in stone. They combined these elements according to any of three architectural orders — Doric, Ionic, Corinthian — to form the entablature (the decorated lintel carried by the columns). Mouldings may have gotten their start as a way to disguise coarsely fitted joints in early buildings. By the time of the Parthenon, though, they were a device to create highlights and shadows on surfaces to engage the eye.

These basic shapes have been reinterpreted and recombined many times in succeeding ages. The Romans adopted Greek archi-

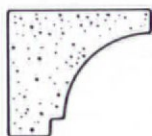


ecture, and through the use of compasses and other mechanical tools, simplified many moulding shapes to their own tastes. Artisans in the Middle Ages took even greater liberties. Norman style mouldings (c. 1075-1175) are mostly rounds and hollows, rarely using the *ogee*, *ovolo*, or *cyma recta*. Early English mouldings of the Gothic period, although very deeply cut, show even less variety. When Colonial American carpenters took to shaping their own mouldings out of wood, they borrowed many contours from these classical European building styles, but configured them according to the not-so-mathematical whims of Yankee invention.

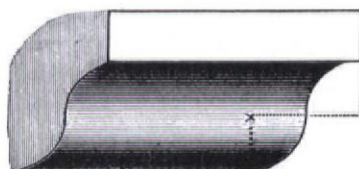
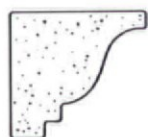
The antique moulding names are seldom used anymore, but the shapes they describe are more widely seen than ever.



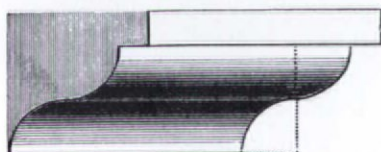
ASTRAGAL: A small, semicircular convex moulding — a bead.



CAVETTO: The cove. Cavettos are hollow mouldings containing at least one-quarter of a circle in section.



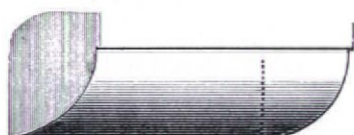
CYMA RECTA (cymatium): The ogee to many, this is a double-curved moulding, concave above and convex below.



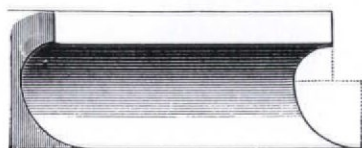
CYMA REVERSA (inverted cymatium): The reverse ogee — a double-curved moulding, convex above and concave below.



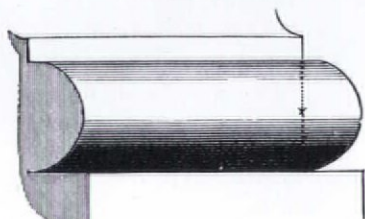
FILLET: A small, square band used on the face of mouldings.



OVOLO: In modern terms, the quarter-round. A wide, convex, very versatile shape, often used alone on inside corners.



SCOTIA (trochilus or case-ment): A non-circular concave moulding designed to cast a strong shadow.



TORUS: A bold convex moulding of semicircular profile, often called a rope moulding.

HISTORICAL MOULDINGS SOURCES

Many period moulding patterns are once again being produced by small companies across the country. The following companies offer the most extensive lines. However, even these companies specialize, so matching your particular baseboard, say, may take some checking around.

Bartley's Mill

8515 San Leandro St., Dept. OHJ
Oakland, CA 94621
(415) 569-5533
Custom softwood & hardwood mouldings.

Bendix Mouldings, Inc.

235 Pegasus Ave., Dept. OHJ
Northvale, NJ 07647
(800) 526-0240
Carved & embossed mouldings in hardwoods & pine.

Camden Window & Millwork

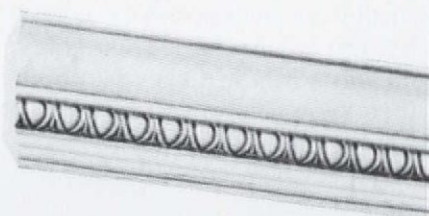
1551 John Tipton Blvd., Dept. OHJ
Pennsauken, NJ 08110
(800) 345-2338
Complete line of historical casings, mouldings, & specialty millwork.

Cumberland Woodcraft Co., Inc.

PO Drawer 609, Dept. 168
Carlisle, PA 17063
(717) 243-0063
Selected Victorian mouldings

Dovetail Woodworking

836 Middle Rd., Dept. OHJ
East Greenwich, RI 02818
(401) 885-2403
Victorian and Colonial mouldings & casings.



Embossed wood moulding from Driwood

Driwood Moulding Company

PO Box 1729, Dept. OHJ
Florence, SC 29503
(803) 662-0541
Embossed ornamental wood
mouldings & cornices.

House of Moulding

15202 Oxnard St., Dept. OHJ
Van Nuys, CA 91411
(818) 781-5300
Selected milled and embossed
mouldings.

Mad River Woodworks

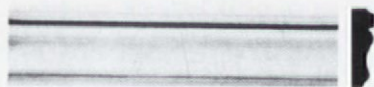
PO Box 163, Dept. OHJ
Arcata, CA 95521
(707) 826-0629
Victorian mouldings & millwork.

Millwork Supply Company

2225 First Ave. So., Dept. OHJ
Seattle, WA 98134
(206) 622-1450
Stock mouldings in hemlock, fir,
& oak.

N.J. Hardwoods, Inc.

1340 West Front St., Dept. OHJ
Plainfield, NJ 07063
(201) 754-0990
Period mouldings in oak, cherry,
walnut, & other hardwoods.



Trim from Old World Moulding

**Old World Moulding & Finish-
ing, Inc.**

115 Allen Blvd., Dept. OHJ
Farmingdale, NY 11735
(516) 293-1789
Extensive line of embossed
mouldings.

Perkins Architectural Millwork

Route 5, Box 264-W, Dept. OHJ
Wiley Page Rd.
Longview, TX 75601
(214) 663-3036
Restoration mouldings in ash, oak,
& other woods.

**Piscataqua Architectural
Woodwork, Co.**

RFD 2, Dept. OHJ
Durham, NH 03824
(603) 868-2663
Hand-planed 17th- & 18th-century
mouldings.

San Francisco Victoriana

2245 Palou Ave., Dept. OHJ
San Francisco, CA 94124
(415) 648-0313
Victorian mouldings & casings in
redwood & pine.

Sheppard Millwork, Inc.

21020 70th Ave. W., Dept. OHJ
Edmonds, WA 98020
(206) 771-4645
Selected Victorian mouldings.

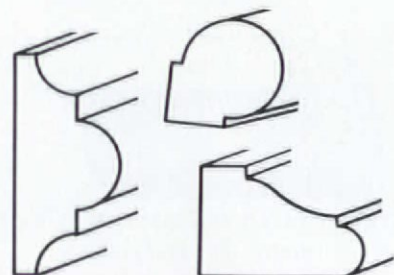
*Wainscot cap from
Silverton*



*A wainscot assembly from Silver-
ton's stock line*

Silverton Victorian Mill Works

Box 2987-OE6
Durango, CO 81302
(303) 259-5915
Full line of Victorian mouldings &
casings.



Available from W.P. Stephens

**W.P. Stephens Lumber
Company**

22 Polk St.
PO Box 1267, Dept. OHJ
Marietta, GA 30061
(404) 428-1531
Large selection of moulds, casings,
& trim.

W.A. Smoot Co., Inc.

PO Box 88, Dept. OHJ
Alexandria, VA 22313
(703) 549-0960
Extensive line of mouldings in
oak, pine, & mahogany.



GOthic REVIVAL

by James C. Massey & Shirley Maxwell

Although Americans remained faithful to their love affair with Greek Revival buildings for a remarkably long time, architects and builders fretted over the inflexibility of some classical architectural forms (see "Greek Revival Houses," OHJ September/October 1988). Thus, even during the early decades of the 19th century, other exotic revival styles began to turn heads — from Roman to Moorish to Chinese to Egyptian to Gothic to Italianate. But the only styles that came anywhere near competing with the Greek were the Gothic Revival and the Italianate. Although neither style was embraced as wholeheartedly by American homebuilders as Greek Revival, Gothic Revival ran a respectable second for a good 20 years.

Gothic Revival sprang primarily from two philosophical trends. The first was the interest in wilder, more naturalistic and picturesque landscapes, which cried out for a romantic building style. The second was the search for an architectural form for churches that was more "Christian" than the classical temple. The architecture of medieval England seemed to satisfy both needs.

America's distinctive approach to Gothic evolved over many decades. It began in the 18th century, when a few medieval decorative motifs were simply pasted onto Georgian or Federal buildings. Before long, Gothic decoration dominated the blocky buildings. In the 1830s, the ecclesiastical movement spread from England to the United



The Queset House in North Easton, Mass., above, was built 1854-55 "in the Andrew Jackson Downing style." Downing approved of prominent chimneys and porches on Gothic houses.



Gothic Revival is a style of details: In this doorway alone is an impressive Tudor arch, diamond-paned transom and sidelights, square columns, and simulated Gothic arches — actually artfully placed corner brackets.

States, leading to serious imitations of English rural parish church architecture of the Middle Ages — not just surface ornamentation but fully integrated Gothic designs with irregular shapes and plans. At the same time, a rural Gothic style was developing. It had no real architectural model, but was loosely based on the English country cottage of the same period and popularized by a rash of very popular architectural pattern books aimed at the middle-class home-builder. Gothic Revival of the post-Civil War period, on the other hand, was characterized by more eclectic, high-style buildings — creative interpretations of Gothic forms rather than mere copies.

Architects in America flirted with Gothicism long before the style we call Gothic Revival appeared. Thomas Jefferson planned to erect a Gothic “temple” at Monticello. Benjamin Henry Latrobe, America’s first professional architect, hoped to start a trend with his 1799 design for Sedgely in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. These and other early efforts are usually described as “Gothick,” an archaic spelling favored by contemporary observers for buildings that used decorative elements taken from Gothic churches.

Except at Sedgely, Latrobe’s predilection for Gothick was stifled, since most of his clients preferred the Greek Revival. By the 1830s, however, Victorians were ready to turn their backs on the cool, rational principles of neoclassicism and to embrace the romantic qualities of the religious and artistic fervor of medieval England and of Sir Walter Scott’s popular novels set in picturesque Scottish castles. Gothic Revival suited the new sensibility.

In 1832, Alexander Jackson Davis, a prolific American architect who would carry the torch for Gothicism well into the 1870s, designed Glenellen in Baltimore, Maryland. Glenellen, now demolished, was America’s first fully developed Gothic Revival house. Davis published the design, along with plans for similar houses, in his book *Rural Residences*. Books by his friend and admirer, landscape architect Andrew Jackson Downing, fueled public interest in the style. Other architects — Gervase Wheeler, William Ranlett, and Calvert Vaux, to name a few — followed with their own volumes full of detailed plans, drawings, and specifications for Gothic houses. These books were snapped up by builders across the country, and houses based on their designs were soon constructed, with only minor variations, in widely separated geographical areas. Gothic was most popular in the Northeast, and especially in New England. Nonetheless, the style made significant inroads even in the South, a bastion of Greek and Italian architecture.

In the 1830s, English architect A.W. Pugin, considered the father of the Gothic Revival movement, attempted to define its principles in his books, *Contrasts* and *True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture*. John Ruskin, the prominent British art historian and social critic, added force to the argument for Gothic architecture by equating architectural “goodness” (embodied in the vertical, asymmetrical, picturesque, naturalistic designs of Gothic church architecture) with morality.

In this country, Davis and Downing became the spokes-

Photo: J.C. Massey

men for Gothic Revival. Big believers in the spiritual benefits of country living, they emphasized the suitability of Gothic "cottages" (a term which covered a wide range of building sizes, from small farmhouses to large suburban residences) in rural settings. Downing also insisted that buildings express their function, materials, and construction truthfully. According to Downing, houses should include prominent chimneys and porches to make them look like places for people to live. And building materials should proclaim their true nature; frame buildings with wood siding, for instance, should not be painted up to look as if they were made of stone. Much to his chagrin, things often didn't work out quite that way.

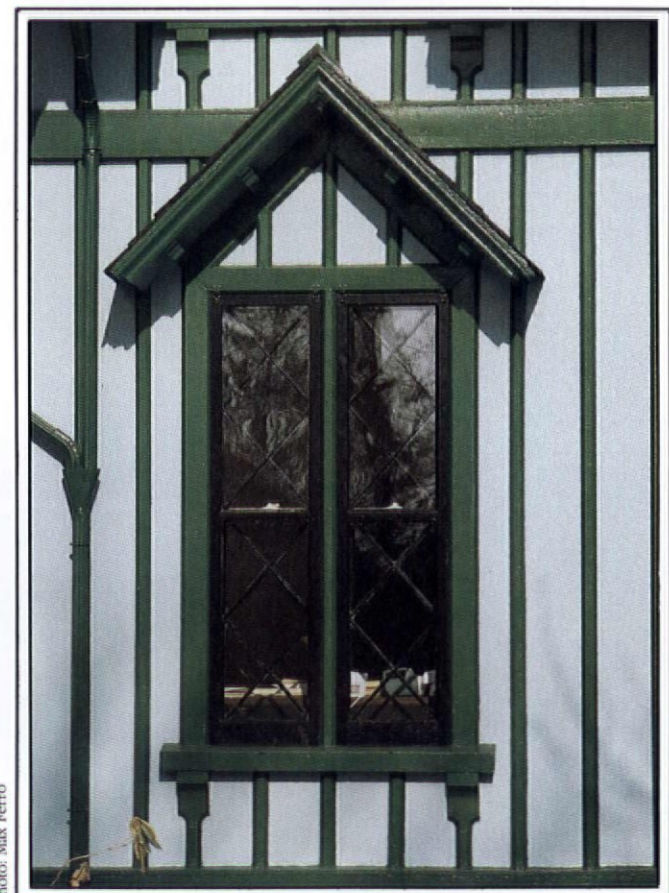
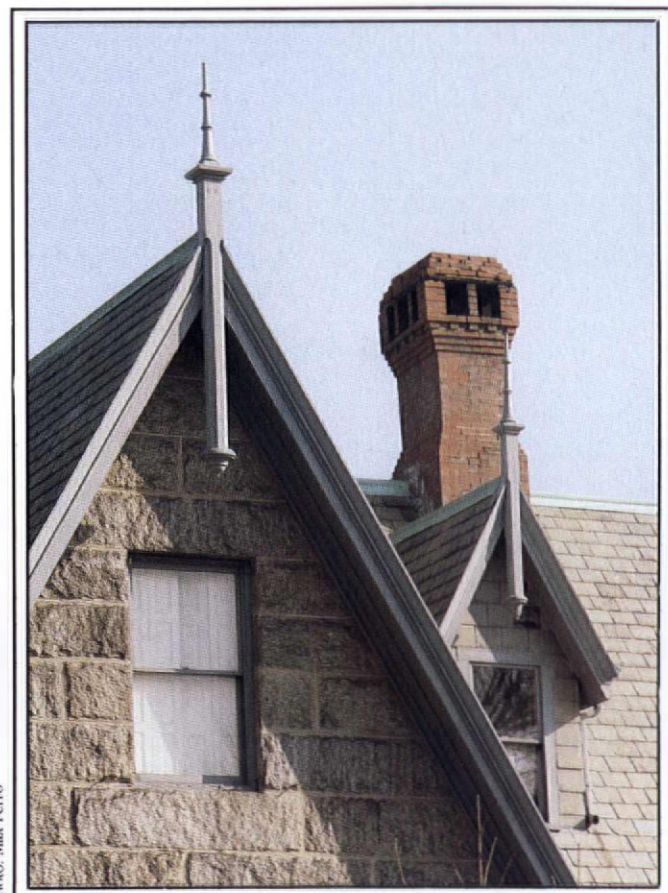
Although leading American architects like A.J. Davis, Richard Upjohn, and John Notman strove for "correct," fully integrated Gothic designs in their high-style buildings, in less sophisticated hands Gothic Revival became a style of decorative details, more often than not applied to plain boxes. Most homebuilders neither knew nor cared about the style's philosophical underpinnings. Just as they had done with Greek Revival forms, they used what they liked and ignored the rest.

The fact that the buildings they copied were most frequently constructed of masonry, usually stone, perturbed American builders not a whit. They were perfectly content to use good old abundant American wood for simple cottages and to leave the stone and brick for grander struc-

tures. Although horizontal siding was common, board-and-batten construction achieved more of the desired vertical effect while still honestly expressing the humble building materials and construction techniques used. And most homebuilders had no need in their light, balloon-framed, wooden houses for flying buttresses, vaulted arches, and the other structural inventions that enabled 13th-century stonemasons to build their soaring churches, but they liked the simpler forms of Gothic ornament very much indeed.

Two main types of Gothic house emerged. The pointed (or rural) Gothic features very steep gables, ornate bargeboards, and abundant use of the pointed, or lancet, arch. Battlements, parapets, and square towers dominate the castellated, or castle-like, Gothic. The pointed Gothic form, whether cottage or mansion, was found most often in rural settings, since it did not lend itself to closely set urban sites. The castellated Gothic was somewhat better suited for city living but far from commonplace.

The most popular "Gothic" feature in houses was a very steeply pitched gable (or gables), often trimmed with a wooden scrollwork bargeboard, or vergeboard, pierced with such Gothic motifs as trefoils, quatrefoils, or rows of little pointed arches. Diamond-paned casement windows were frequently used. Small, fancifully trimmed one-storey entrance porches, large, striking chimney tops, clustered columns with chamfered edges, Tudor arches, finials, and pendants were all icing on the cake. Elaborate cast-iron



More details from two New England Gothic Revivals: Ornamental chimney and Gothic pendants with finials on steeply pitched gables, left. Painted board-and-batten siding and diamond-paned windows, right.

ornament was a hallmark of high-style Gothic.

In rural areas, heavy, carved stone bargeboards were replaced by wooden scrollwork produced by a new machine, the scrollsaw, in the thoroughly American treatment now called Carpenter Gothic. This distinctively American style often featured vertical board-and-batten siding (see detail photo, page 35, right) and fancy scroll-sawn bargeboards. In fact, the style was heavily influenced by the romantic landscapes turned out by painters of the Hudson River School, and Downing, Davis, and other proponents first designed cottages with such Hudson River settings in mind.



Photo: Gordon Book



New Bedford Office of Housing & Neighborhood Development



Photo: J.C. Massey



Photo: J.C. Massey

Clockwise from upper right: A "Gothicized" I-house in Westchester County, N.Y.; vernacular Gothic on Sullivan's Island, S.C.; Staunton Hill in Charlotte County, Virg., a castellated Gothic; a New Bedford, Mass., house with decorative bargeboard.

Certainly, no geographical area had more practical reasons than the South to reject the pointed Gothic trend. The steeply pitched Gothic roof wasn't exactly ideal for southern climates; there were no heavy snows to get rid of in winter, and the roof had an uncomfortable amount of heat-absorbing surface area in summer. Irregular floorplans had little to offer in a region where it was wise to coax any available breeze to blow straight through the house. Also, it was difficult to incorporate in a Gothic design that necessity in the Deep South: the full-width veranda. The horizontal lines of a wide veranda effectively tended to cancel out the verticality of Gothic design. None of this stopped fashion-conscious Southerners, however, and the fair number of southern examples are a testament to the power of the Gothic style.

Charlotte County, Virginia's Staunton Hill (1848-50) (opposite page, bottom, left), is a high-style example of castellated Gothic, which was generally reserved for schools, government offices, and other public edifices. In this castle-house, the porch is broken into three small sections so as not to detract from the vertical impression of the overall design. The main block of the building is set off at each corner with slender towers, which are echoed in the tall chimneys on the wings. The facade is dominated by an

imposing two-storey pointed-arch window with Gothic tracery. But it's still basically a three-storey classical box with symmetrical wings.

Even in the South, Gothic was not confined to the fanciest addresses. In the charming little vernacular house on Sullivan's Island, South Carolina (opposite page, bottom, right), the minimum of detail serves to establish an unmistakable Gothic identity: a couple of steeply pointed dormers and a ruffle of scalloped trim under the porch roof.

The Gothic Revival lingered in the South, as elsewhere, until nearly the turn of the century. But despite its extraordinary longevity in various forms, from cottages to churches to skyscrapers like the Woolworth Building in Manhattan (1910-1913), Gothic Revival eventually did lose steam. It was eclipsed as the dominant force in American architecture by the Italianate style, which blossomed just before the Civil War.

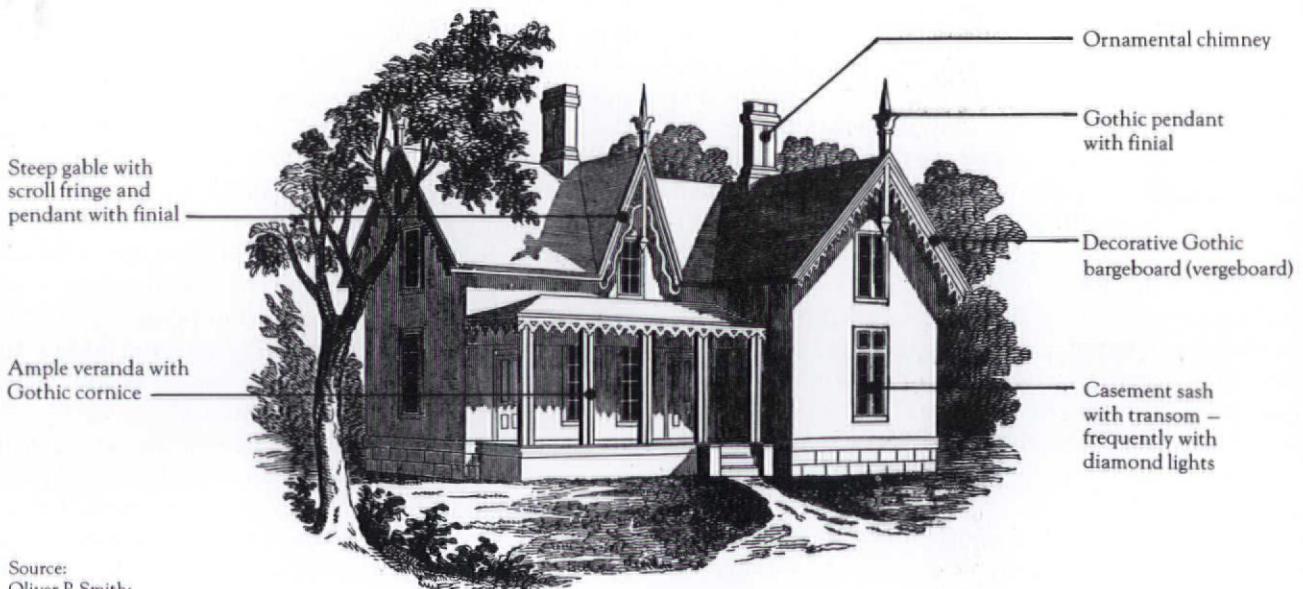
For another view of the style, see "The Gothic Revival," OHJ, December 1984.



THE GOTHIC REVIVAL COTTAGE

Picturesque and romantic,
informal and asymmetrical,
quintessentially domestic,
promoted in widely available pattern books,
it was built in town and
country across the United States.

READING THE OLD HOUSE



Source:
Oliver P. Smith:
The Domestic Architect, 1854
J.C. Massey '88

ARTS AND CRAFTS

Collecting

by Ray Stubblebine



An auction today, the Gustav Stickley desk and table, left, would cost from \$35,000 to \$70,000 and from \$5000 to \$10,000, respectively. The Roycroft magazine stand, right, would go for \$8000 to \$12,000.



Gustav Stickley's Craftsman ethic was more than a style; it was a way of life. True believers had Stickley furniture, lighting fixtures, and hardware in their homes. Today, many owners of Craftsman houses are trying to furnish them at least in part with furniture that's fitting. And the simple, rugged furniture has again become popular even among those without an Arts and Crafts house.

Stickley turned out his furniture in a large factory for over 16 years. Although not terribly rare, it's become hard to find, and extremely high prices illustrate its antiques-market status. There were numerous other manufacturers of A&C furnishings, including Stickley's own brothers (Albert, Leopold, and J. George), Charles Limbert, the Grand Rapids Bookcase and Chair Company, and Elbert Hubbard's Roycrofters. Other manufacturers jumped on the bandwagon, so there's plenty of generic Mission Oak of lesser quality around.

How do you distinguish the valuable pieces from the junk? The better Mission furniture has a sense of style and

proportion that makes it look "right." The better pieces also have solid joinery, usually with through tenons exposed and all connections pegged with dowels. Screws, if used at all, anchor table tops to the base or chair seats to the chair. Most pieces have a very dark brown, fumed-oak finish. (Furniture was darkened in the factory by being shut in rooms with open trays of ammonia, which reacted with the tannic acid in the wood, darkening it.) And most of the major makers "signed" their products with a mark: a decal, metal tag, paper label, or burned-in brand. But don't assume that if a piece is unmarked it's not good quality; many items were not "signed." Another way to identify a piece is to compare it to catalog illustrations.*

A&C prices vary a good deal, depending on the dealer, the type of auction, and the location of the sale. Two new guides contain up-to-date information on prices of specific pieces. One is *The Official Identification and Price Guide to the Arts and Crafts Movement* by Bruce E. Johnson. The other is *Arts and Crafts and Mission at Auction*, which lists more than 700 pieces auctioned in this country from January to July 1988, and includes prices paid.**

The Roycrofters were an Arts and Crafts community of workers in East Aurora, N.Y., led by Elbert Hubbard. They're best known for their hand-printed books and hand-hammered metalware. But they also made a limited amount of hand-crafted furniture, almost all of which is prominently marked with the word "Roycroft" or an orb-and-cross logo. Their furniture looks medieval.

Charles P. Limbert started manufacturing a line of "Dutch Arts and Crafts" furniture in Grand Rapids, Mich., in 1902 and continued production after his 1906 move to Holland, Mich. While some of his pieces are derivative of Gustav Stickley's work, most were influenced more by Charles R. Mackintosh of the British Arts and Crafts movement. They feature cut-out open squares in chairs and tables and subtle curves. Limbert's line is more delicate than Stickley's more rectilinear look. The furniture is well made, and finishes have held up well over the years.

Also in Grand Rapids was the Stickley Brothers Co., operated by brother Albert. Much of this company's work is mediocre, and yet some surviving examples are among the finest designs produced by the Arts and Crafts movement. Unlike Gustav, who seems to have let his designs gradually evolve and change subtly, the Stickley Brothers line changed from one catalog to the next. Their A&C line was manufactured under the label "Quaint Furniture," which appears in many forms, including a gold decal, brass tag, oval cardboard tag, and several burned-in marks.

The Grand Rapids Bookcase and Chair Company produced "Life-Time" furniture. Almost all the designs are derivative of Gustav's work, but the quality of workmanship is excellent and the finishes have held up very well over the years. For the A&C collector on a limited budget, Life-Time is an excellent buy. It's usually marked with a gold and black decal.

Leopold and J. George Stickley set up the "Onondaga Shops" around 1902 in Fayetteville, N.Y. Their early work is of high quality but derivative of Gustav's work. In 1910 they issued a catalog under a new name: "L. & J.G. Stickley Handcraft," with a shopmark in red that could easily be confused with their older brother's red joiner's compass shopmark. In 1912 (perhaps under legal pressure) they changed the name again to "The Work of L. & J.G. Stickley." This mark appears as a rectangular decal in white and red, as a burned-in mark, or as a metal plate nailed to the piece.

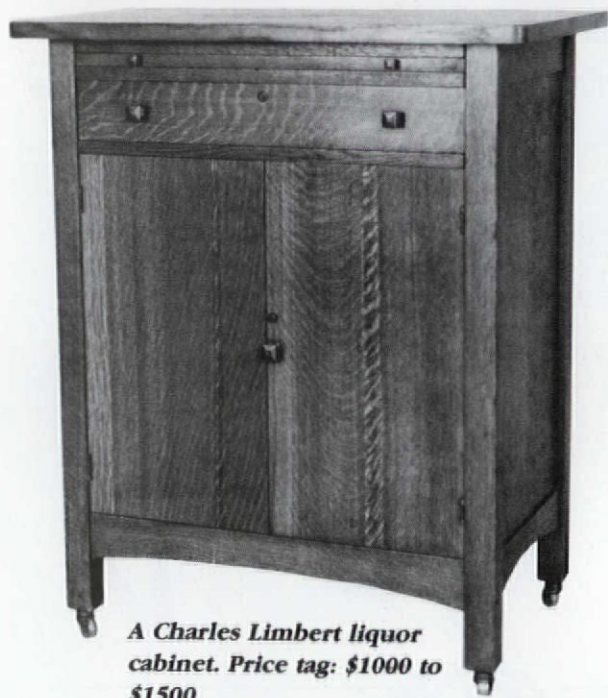
*Turn-of-the-Century Editions, 6 Varick Street, New York, NY 10013, publishes a number of reproduction catalogs.

**The Official Identification and Price Guide to the Arts and Crafts Movement, published by Random House, is 500-plus pages and illustrated in black and white and color. It's available from Johnson at P.O. Box 6660, Durham, NC 27708; \$14.95 ppd. Arts and Crafts and Mission at Auction is available from The M.R.A. Group, Arts and Crafts, One Mount Vernon St., Winchester, MA 01890; \$12.80 ppd.



A Roycroft desk (\$1500 to \$3500) and rocker (\$400 to \$1000) with the telltale orb-and-cross logo.

Logos, clockwise, starting top left: Gustav Stickley, the Roycrofters, Stickley Brothers Co., Leopold and J. George Stickley, Grand Rapids Bookcase and Chair Company, Charles P. Limbert.



A Charles Limbert liquor cabinet. Price tag: \$1000 to \$1500.

The quality of their work remained high, and their designs became more original in later years.

Gustav Stickley started out as a Syracuse, New York, furniture maker. He began producing Arts and Crafts designs after returning from a trip to Britain and Europe at the turn of the century, and by 1900 was selling his "New Furniture" through the Tobey Furniture Company. By 1901 he had established "United Crafts" in Eastwood, N.Y., and was selling his work through selected dealers across the country. In 1905, the year after the company name changed to "Craftsman Workshops," he began to publish in his magazine *The Craftsman* plans and instructions for building his furniture at home for those who thought it was too expensive.

Gustav's furniture in general is well designed and consistently high quality. The selection of wood and the use of veneers by 1915, when he was facing bankruptcy, indicates a downward slide. Some of his earlier and best designs were discontinued when production volume increased. And, at least in all the pieces I've examined, the quality of the finish is inconsistent and in general does not hold up as well as those used by his competitors. Stickley

ARTS AND CRAFTS Reproductions



In the mid-1970s, when the current revival of interest in Arts and Crafts started, those "in the know" could be counted on two hands, and most pieces could be had for several hundred dollars. But today, with auction houses like Christie's holding specialized A&C sales, and with celebrities like Barbra Streisand, Richard Gere, and Steven Spielberg taking a liking to the style, prices have gone through the roof.

It's not surprising, then, that a few enterprising craftsmen have come on the scene to offer quality A&C reproductions. As recently as two years ago, these craftsmen were shunned by most serious collectors, but now many of them acknowledge that reproductions have their place in the A&C market.

Lighting fixtures are among the rarest A&C pieces, and prices in the four- and five-digit range are far from uncommon. However, Michael Adams of Oswego, New York, can offer you a reproduction that's as good as a Gustav

Stickley original — but costs substantially less. Although Adams offers only a limited number of styles, he does make some of Stickley's most popular designs: the heart-cutout sconce and chandelier and the four-drop, cross-arm chandelier.

According to Adams' manager, A&C dealer Jerry Cohen, an Adams reproduction ranges in price from \$395 for the simplest hammered-copper-and-blown-glass shade fixture to \$1,200 to \$3,000 for a chandelier. Delivery takes four to eight weeks for items not in stock. All orders must be placed through Cohen at The Mission Oak Shop, 4228 Park Blvd., Oakland, CA 94602; (415) 482-1420.

Cohen also supplies reproduction furniture made of quarter-sawn white oak — the medium Stickley used. They're made by a local furniture maker. The reproductions include: a Gustav Stickley spindle settle for \$1,800; Gustav Stickley spindle love-seat, \$1,600; Gustav Stickley spindle cube chair, \$800; a Charles Limbert waste basket, \$145; and a Limbert cut-out tabouret, \$175.

Another highly skilled craftsman of A&C furniture reproductions is Coly Vulpiani of Kingston, N.Y. In addition to exact replicas, the Vulpiani Workshop offers pieces in the Mission style, from individual items to cabinetwork for entire interiors. The Vulpiani Workshop began years ago as a refinishing shop for A&C furniture. Today, it concentrates almost exclusively on A&C reproductions, both American and European, including those by Frank Lloyd Wright, Greene & Greene, Charles Mackintosh, and Josef Hoffman.

Prices vary widely; a Mackintosh hall table costs approximately \$3,500. Delivery takes 10 to 12 weeks, and all orders must be made through Vulpiani himself at (914) 339-6146; 11 Field Court, Kingston, NY 12401.

Stephen Wescott of Washington, D.C., also makes furniture in the A&C style. For now, his reproduction work is a hobby, but one he hopes to expand into a business.

Wescott doesn't attempt to make exact copies, preferring to put his creative self into most of the pieces. Chairs, settles, and chests are his specialty. He likes to experiment with different woods, particularly walnut, cherry, and maple. (White oak was Stickley's medium, with some exceptions.)

Some examples of Wescott's prices: \$1,800 for a Morris chair; \$3,500 for a fall-front desk; \$1,200 for a bed. Prices

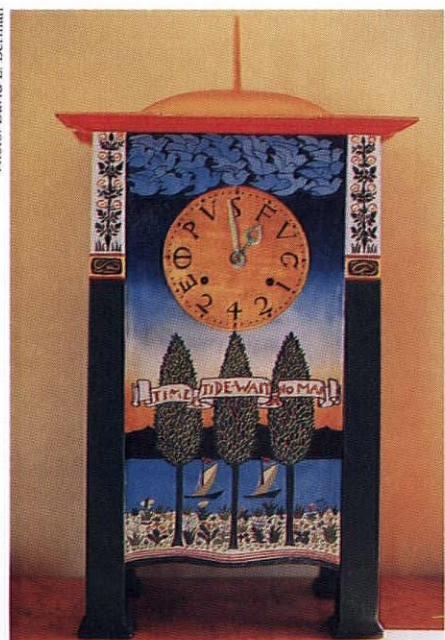
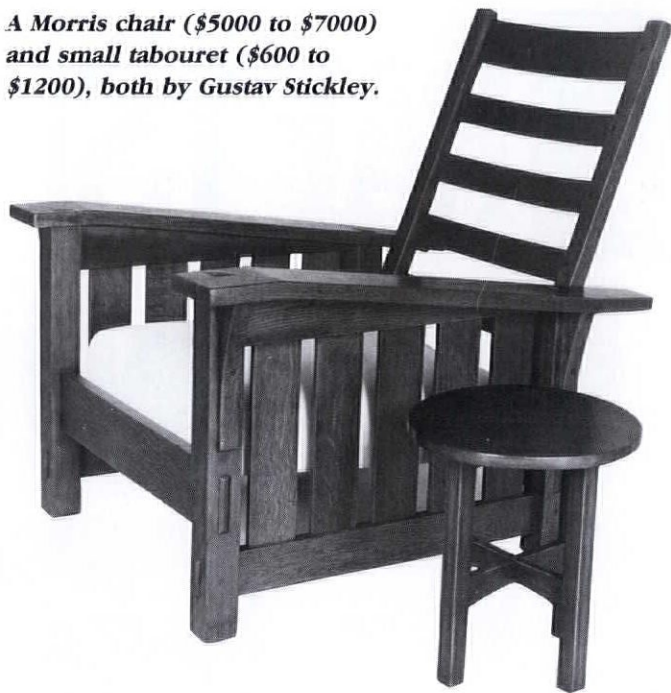
seems to have preferred a shellac base, which produced finishes that had unusual depth and transparency but were also fragile.

Stickley continued to expand his business despite signs that America's tastes were changing. He opened a new 12-storey Craftsman Building in New York City in 1914. Gustav believed so strongly in the Arts and Crafts movement, he could not or would not see that the the country's interest was increasingly focused on America's history, not on her future. Colonial reproductions, revival styles, and historical "adaptations" eclipsed the modern styles.

Stickley went bankrupt in 1915; by 1916 the Craftsman empire was in shambles and the magazine had folded. And yet, 70 years later, his words ring true: "Beauty does not imply elaboration or ornament . . . our object is to substitute the luxury of taste for the luxury of costliness . . . to place within the reach of the middle class purchaser, articles of practical use, which are at the same time, works of art."

Ula Ihnytzky, an editor at Associated Press, and Ray Stubblebine, a freelance photographer, bought their first Stickley piece at a house sale in New Hampshire eight years ago.

A Morris chair (\$5000 to \$7000) and small tabouret (\$600 to \$1200), both by Gustav Stickley.



David Berman's reproduction of Voysey's famous painted mantel clock.

vary slightly depending on the design and kind of wood used.

Wescott will show photographs of his work to anyone interested. He'll also take custom orders. You can reach him at 3820 Beecher St., Washington, D.C. 20007; (202) 337-1978.

David E. Berman, for many years a cabinetmaker of 17th-, 18th-, and 19th-century reproduction furniture, switched to Arts and Crafts after moving into an A&C house in 1982. Berman, who believes there are already

enough cabinetmakers doing American A&C reproductions, concentrates exclusively on the work of British artists like Voysey and Mackintosh. He makes replicas as well as pieces inspired by the originals. For example, he's just completed a mantel clock based on Voysey's famous painted one. It sells for \$2,500.

Currently in progress are some Voysey chairs, which run from \$1,800 to \$2,200. Berman is also about to embark on a screen series, mainly as a backdrop for period wallpapers, such as

those by William Morris.

Berman will take orders for commissioned pieces. You can reach him at Trustworth Studio, Box 324, N. Scituate, MA 02060; (617) 545-5289.

— Ula Ihnytzky

The individuals discussed above are craftsmen creating custom pieces of the highest quality. Several small manufacturers also offer stock and semi-custom lines of Arts and Crafts pieces, all highly regarded. For more on these, see page 66. — ed.



Michael Adams, above, makes reproductions of some of Gustav Stickley's most popular lighting fixtures.

CRAFTSMAN HOUSE NO. 104

by Ula Ilnytzky



raftsman House No. 104, built in 1911 in northern New Jersey for about \$4,500, became ours on December 20, 1984.

We discovered our house was designed by Gustav Stickley, leader of the turn-of-the-century Arts and Crafts movement in America, while poring over some old *Craftsman* magazines that he published between 1901 and 1916 — but this discovery came after we had signed the purchase contract. We were elated. We'd been collecting Mission furniture for four years and had become obsessed with owning an Arts & Crafts house.

Shortly after getting married, Ray and I had filled our nondescript little 1920s house with Victoriana. But very soon — much in the same way as Stickley had — we grew tired of the Victorian curlicues. Seeing the occasional Mission piece in antique shops, we grew to love the furniture's clean lines and robust structure. We began selling our Victorian collection and redecorating our home in A&C. In no time, our Mission collection had outgrown our house, and the bug had mushroomed into the desire to own an Arts and Crafts home.

But our quest turned out to be, if not an impossible task, then a difficult one. For realtors, the term "Arts and Crafts" conjured up images of a house made of popsicle sticks! We described *ad nauseum* the typical characteristics of an A&C house — beamed ceilings, built-in window seats, natural woodwork and panelling, fireplace nook — made sketches, even showed them pictures from Stickley's books, *Craftsman Homes* and *More Craftsman Homes*. We were getting nowhere.

Toward the end of the second year of our search, two realtors who had been working with us for about a year

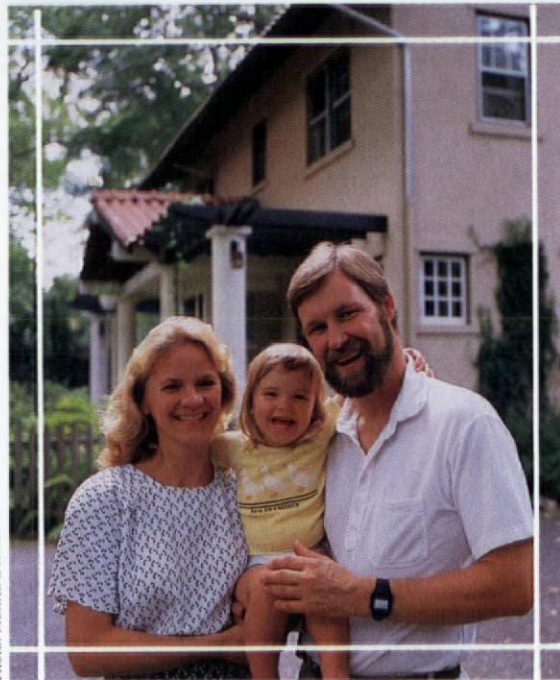


Photo: Monica Bernad

Ula Ilnytzky and Ray Stubblebine with their daughter, Nina.

began understanding the "look." Many times they came close, showing us real A&C homes that, for whatever reason, just weren't quite right for us. They kept digging, though.

Finally, they struck gold! It was a brisk October day, and one of them had just finished showing us a house only blocks from the house we now live in. It turned out to be another of those "close but no cigar" houses. As we stood outside this house chatting and aimlessly flipping through the Multiple Listing book, we came across our house. The photo did it no justice: The photographer mistook the back for the front, and it was described as over 100 years old. We insisted it couldn't be that old and asked to see it. By the time Ray and I arrived there, the realtor had already

gone through the house and was coming through the front door with "This isn't for you" on her lips. We asked to see it anyway.

To her astonishment, the first words to issue from my husband's lips were "This is it!" What had thrown her off was that all the woodwork in the house had been slathered with paint, and natural woodwork was something we'd told her again and again was essential.

Well, it still was. So we bought the house and immediately hired workers to strip the multiple layers of paint covering exquisite chestnut panels and cypress beams.

Little did we know what lay ahead. Talk about interior remuddlings! What hurt most was the painted woodwork — even the ceiling beams hadn't been spared. This had totally altered the character of the house, taking away the warmth and coziness that are the stamp of any A&C interior.

Using heat guns and chemicals, the professional team of five men from Allstrip in Ridgewood, Queens in New York City labored six days a week on the living room panels

and the ceiling beams in the living and dining rooms. All windows and doors were removed and dip-stripped to economize and speed up the job. Once everything was taken down to the bare wood, it was stained and sealed.

This was our most expensive undertaking — \$10,000. Today, almost four years later, we're told the job couldn't be done for twice that much. We feel the money was well spent; had we tried to strip these rooms ourselves, no doubt we'd still be chipping away.

For over a year we made numerous discoveries. There was the fireplace inglenook (complete with built-in benches) that had been ripped out; the mural painting above the fireplace mantel which had been hidden behind a mirror; the missing plate rail in the dining room; the



Top: the unrestored kitchen — “a cook’s nightmare.”

Above: the kitchen after restoration — a dream.

wood ceiling covered by acoustical tiles in the once open (now enclosed) porch; the mysterious light switches that weren't hooked up to any fixtures. The kitchen — everything original gone in the name of so-called improvement — was a decorator's eyesore and a cook's nightmare.

But the house was full of potential. So we attacked the restoration with a vengeance, using up vacation time and putting in 8-hour shifts after full days at work. Almost a year to the day, after falling into bed each night, limbs screaming with pain, I learned I was pregnant! Our timing could not have been better, as I had just finished wallpapering the last bedroom — now our daughter Nina's room.

But I'm getting ahead of myself.



The living room before stripping began.



e moved in five days before Christmas — after “renting” the house for a few weeks to get the dirty work done. It was another week before the strippers, working away to the blare of Calypso music, were done. While the stripping continued, Ray rebuilt the plate rail, based on unstained marks in the stripped woodwork — our clue to where it had been. For the unknown corbel supports under the rail, he designed square wood blocks based on ones we’d seen in the Parker House, built by Stickley for a friend in Morris Plains, N.J.

While I wallpapered, painted the ceilings, and worked at endless other jobs, my husband rewired the electrical system, rebuilt the bathrooms (which also had suffered in the name of progress), replaced sash cords in all the windows, updated the plumbing, and went about countless other tasks.

Ray didn’t get around to rebuilding the fireplace nook until last Christmas. What a tremendous difference! It’s given the room that cozy corner central to almost every A&C house.

Perhaps working on the house’s exterior after nearly completing the interior was working backwards, but we felt we had to have some semblance of order before we could tackle the outside — another huge endeavor. The house needed more than a simple paint job. It had to be powerwashed to remove a layer of peeling, ugly grey texture paint (ah, yet another “improvement” we were trying to undo); our variation on plan 104 was natural concrete from the beginning, with just the trim painted in “Rookwood Green.”

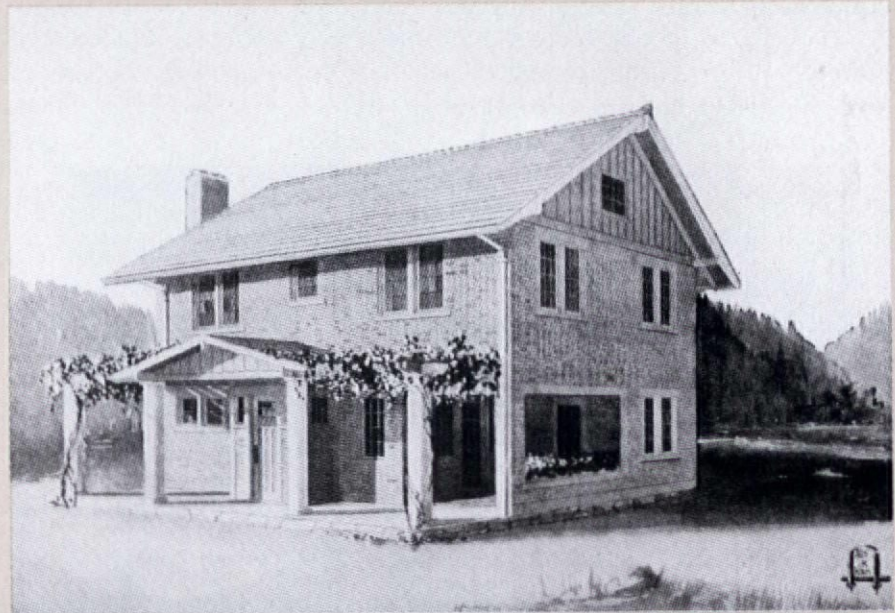
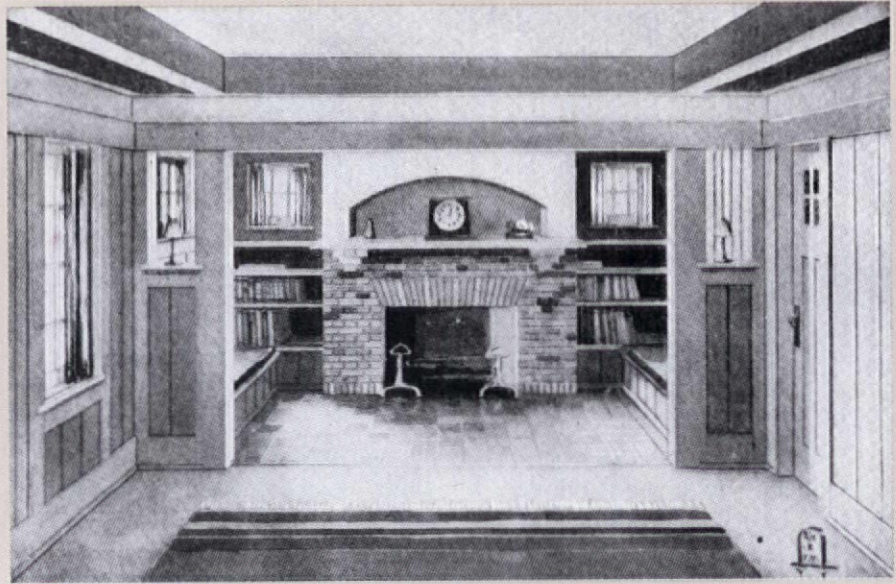
As the term implies, “powerwash” is a method by which water is hosed with great force directly onto the surface being cleaned or removed. The layers of paint, which came down in what seemed like a trillion small chips, landed on shrubbery, grass, flowers, patio. The resulting unsightly mess and the subsequent cleanup certainly rivalled the job we’d just finished up inside.

But the most dramatic change we’ve made to the exterior is restoring the pergola in the front of the house. At one time it had been laden with wisteria and supported by four large, white columns. Two of these columns were removed (due to dry rot, we were told) and all trace of the pergola was gone, except for some beams that we found supporting a wood pile in the backyard. But these, plus a 1920s photograph of the house which we dug up in the town’s files and the drawings from *The Craftsman*, sufficed to tell us how it looked.

Ray undertook to restore the pergola last summer, after ordering two columns from the Somerset Door & Column Co.* in Pennsylvania. The columns set us back \$1000 and the wood and paint for the pergola another \$1000 — a lot of money for a purely aesthetic feature of the house, it could be said. But to us the pergola is essential to the house’s integrity.

*Somerset Door & Column Co., P.O. Box 328, Somerset, PA 15501; (800) 242-7916.





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CRAFTSMAN HOUSE OF BRICK AND CYPRESS CLAPBOARDS: NO. 104: THE RECESSED PORCH IS ESPECIALLY INTERESTING.



Craftsman House No. 104 today, left, and in a 1910 issue of The Craftsman, right. The plans called for a frame house with brick veneer and a slate roof. The Vaill family built their house in 1911 with ceramic cinderblocks and a Spanish-tile roof.

We have taken that extra step to restore as much period flavor as possible — and not only with the furniture, linen, and pottery we've accumulated over the years. For example, in Nina's room, we had an artist friend paint a frieze depicting four outdoor scenes: a country fair, animals in the woods, children playing hide 'n seek, and a little girl fishing by a pond. This idea also came from *Stickley's* magazine; the pond scene was copied directly from a period wallpaper border and the rest was improvised. We dread the day when Nina wants to hang rock-star posters in that room!

We decided not to undo some of the changes made to the house over the years — for example, the sunroom off the dining room and directly behind the living room. This used to be an open dining porch facing the yard. It had been enclosed sometime in the '50s to add much-needed interior space. We decided not to turn it back into a porch. But we removed the clear-glass, double-hung windows separating the living room and the porch and installed stained, amber glass windows (very close in color to ones used by *Stickley*,



An artist friend paints a frieze in Nina's bedroom, using an idea from *Stickley's* magazine.

particularly on doors) to give both rooms privacy.

The restoration was back-breaking; we often speculated what it would be like to find a house in move-in condition. But the pride we feel now when we show off our "before" and "after" photos makes the labor more than worth it.

The work also reaps its rewards each day that we snuggle up on our inglenook benches in front of the fireplace or sit in our living or dining room surrounded by our *Mission* collection — at last in a setting befitting it. The mellow brown of the woodwork blends well with the darker and lighter tones of the furniture.

The house now is a cozy retreat for the family, just as *Stickley* intended.




Ray rebuilt the plate rail in the dining room, above, based on unstained marks in the stripped woodwork.



As I was finishing up this story, Ray's efforts to locate any original residents of our house paid off. Amy Vaill Kelly, now 84 and living on Cape Cod, was thrilled to hear from us. She was 7 years old when her family built the house.

Plans for *Craftsman House No. 104* were published in the December 1910 issue of *Stickley's* magazine. The plans were reversed when the Vaill house was constructed the following year. The original No. 104 was supposed to be a frame house with brick veneer and cypress gables. The Vaill's home was built of "fire and vermine proof" *Natco* Hollow Tile, similar to cinder-block but made of clay. The roof was



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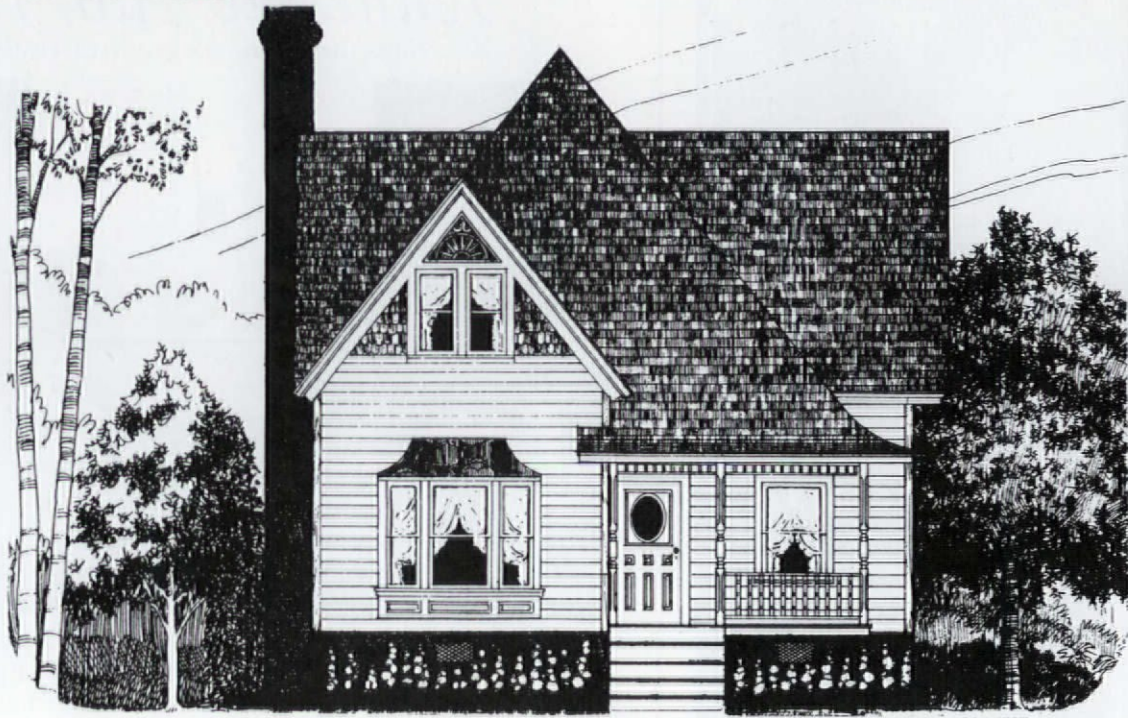
COTTAGE VICTORIAN

Plan #V-03A-HR.

Cost: \$250.

\$300. (set of 5)

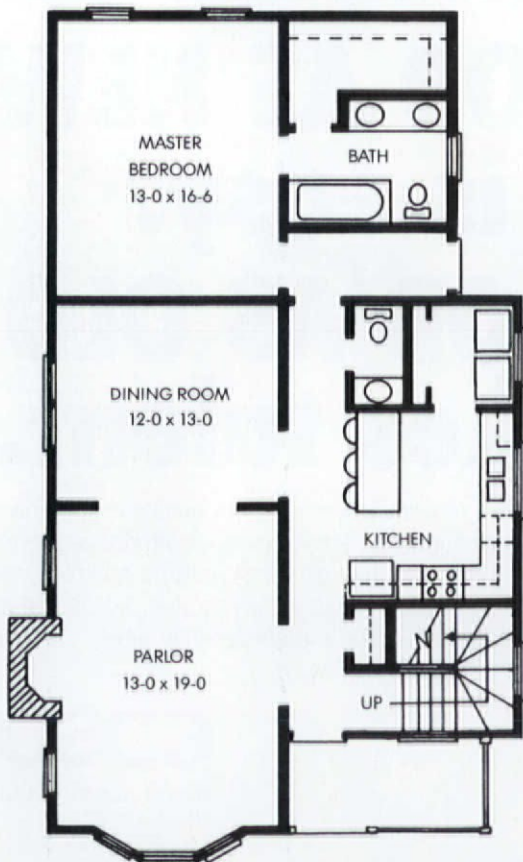
\$335. (set of 8)



SQUARE FOOTAGE	1887
FIRST FLOOR	1202
SECOND FLOOR	665
CEILING HEIGHT	
FIRST FLOOR	9
SECOND FLOOR	8
OVERALL DIMENSIONS	
WIDTH	31
DEPTH	51

This is one of the few Victorian house plans under 2,000 square feet — and so the answer to a popular request. The design was sold through a planbook nearly 100 years ago: It is adapted from George Barber's *The Cottage Souvenir #2*, published in 1890. (The first-floor bedroom is a modern addition.) The second-floor plan skips Victorian hallways in favor of walk-in closets.

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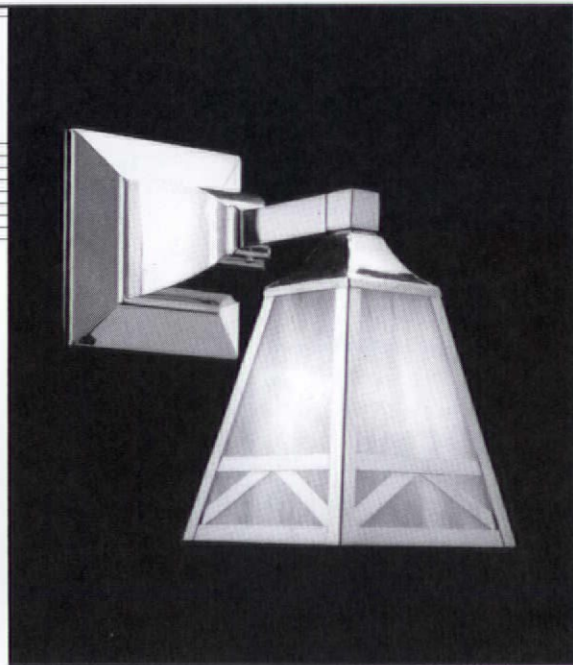
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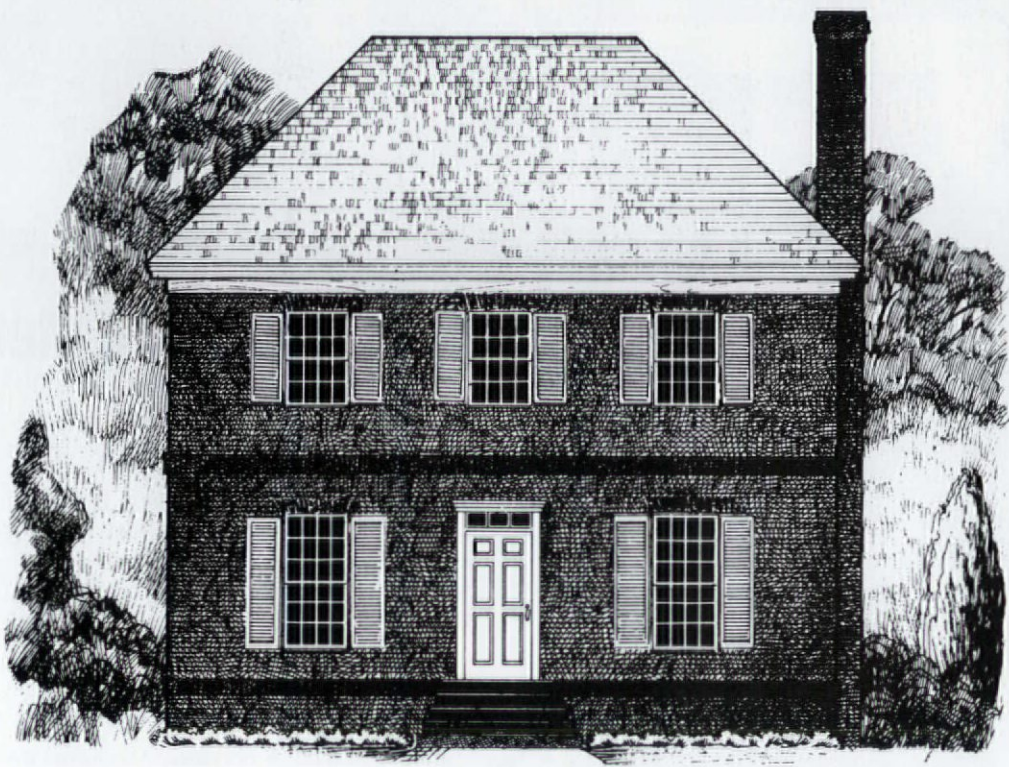
Plan #E-03A-HR.

Cost: \$250.

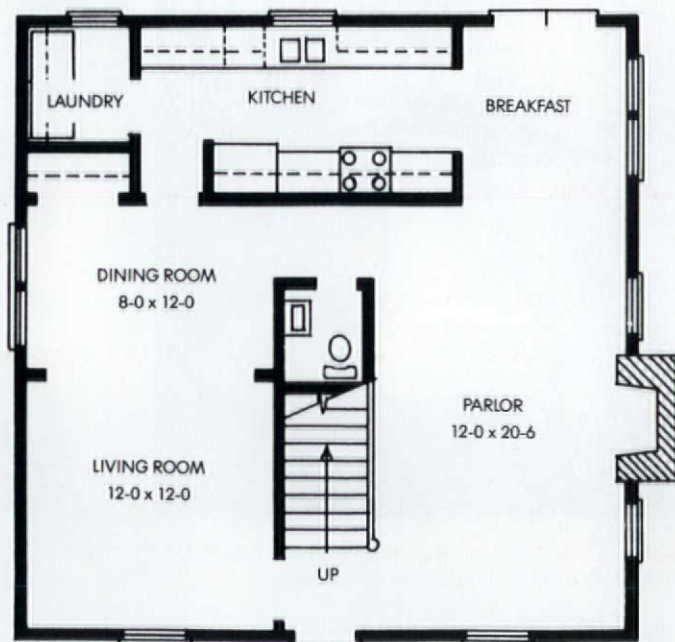
\$300. (set of 5)

\$350. (set of 8)

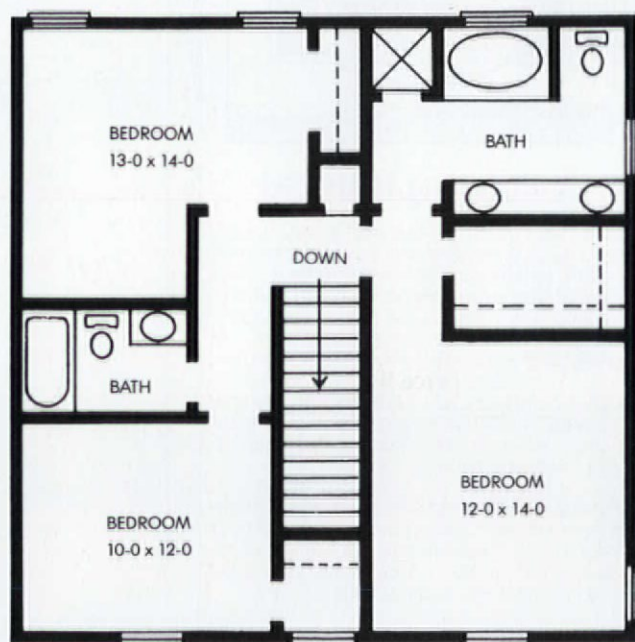
SQUARE FOOTAGE	1756
FIRST FLOOR	900
SECOND FLOOR	856
CEILING HEIGHT	
FIRST FLOOR	9
SECOND FLOOR	8
OVERALL DIMENSIONS	
WIDTH	30
DEPTH	30



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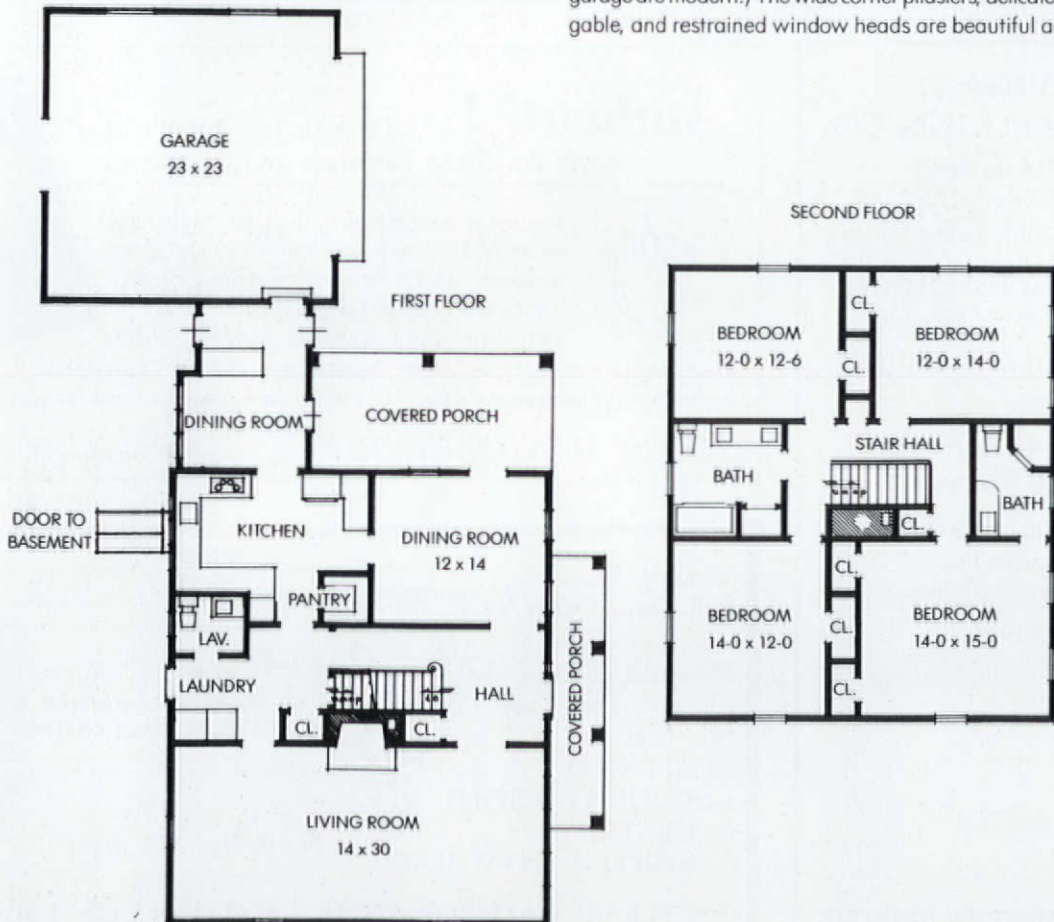
\$156. (set of 5)

\$186. (set of 8)



SQUARE FOOTAGE	2447
FIRST FLOOR	1300
SECOND FLOOR	1147
CEILING HEIGHT	
FIRST FLOOR	7-6
SECOND FLOOR	7-6
OVERALL DIMENSIONS	
WIDTH	74
DEPTH	41
(MAIN HOUSE	37w x 31d)

A classic house of the early 19th century, this plan is a near-reproduction of an actual New England building that still stands. (The breezeway and garage are modern.) The wide corner pilasters, delicate fan window in each gable, and restrained window heads are beautiful and authentic.





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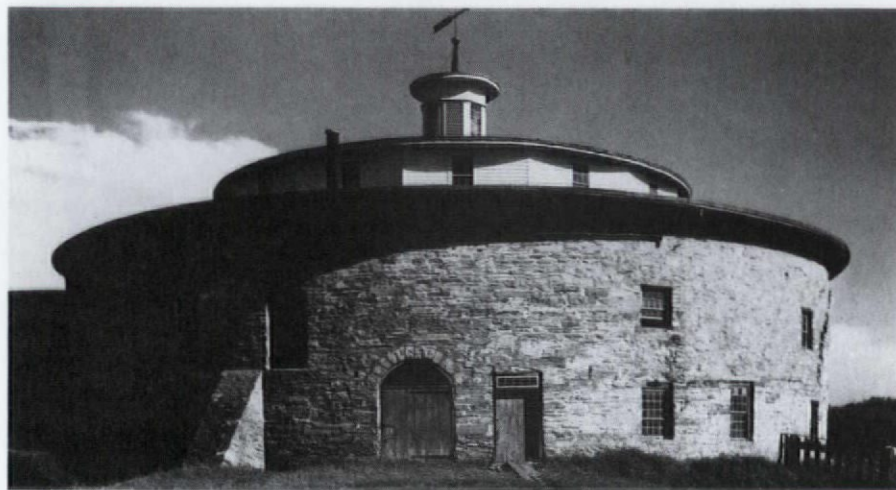
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A Jack Boucher photo of a Shaker round barn from *A Record in Detail*.

These books would make great holiday gifts. Jack Boucher's architectural photographs are delightful. Thatched roofs are chronicled with charm and technical detail in the second volume reviewed. And gardeners should take note of Carole Ottesen's manifesto for a "new American garden."

A Record in Detail: The Architectural Photographs of Jack E. Boucher

With an introduction by William H. Pierson, Jr. 108 pages with 78 black-and-white photographs. University of Missouri Press, c/o CUP Services, P.O. Box 6525, Ithaca, NY 14851; (800) 666-2211. \$37.45 ppd.

If you've been following OHJ's series on house styles, you're probably familiar with the photos of Jack Boucher; his handsome color shot of the Gothic Revival Queset House, for instance, is on page 33.

For 25 years, Boucher has been staff photographer for the Historic American Buildings Survey. This division of the National Park Service was established in 1933, and continues to document the nation's architectural heritage. Boucher's HABS work now encompasses more than 50,000 photos of structures in every state except Alaska. The 74 striking black-and-white photos in this volume explore the architecture of 22 structures,

from the 268-year-old David Ogden House in Fairfield, Connecticut, to Frank Lloyd Wright's Johnson Wax Corporation Building in Racine, Wisconsin. Each building is briefly discussed, and captions point out significant details.

Photographers will like architectural historian William Pierson's essay on the technical challenges of photographing buildings. On a lighter note is Boucher's own account of his quarter-century of triumphs and mishaps as a HABS photographer.

Thatch: A Complete Guide to the Ancient Craft of Thatching

by Robert West. 160 pages profusely illustrated with black-and-white photographs and line drawings. The Main Street Press, William Case House, Pittstown, NJ 08867. \$22 ppd. Thatching is one of the oldest building crafts still practiced. The charming roofs of reed or straw are known to most Americans only through pictures of medieval English buildings, but today in many parts of Western Europe the thatched roof is making a comeback. During the past decade, nearly half of the thatching work done in Britain has been on brand-new construction. Author and English master thatcher Robert West recently completed his first American commission, the thatching of roofs at

Jamestown Plantation in Virginia. More U.S. projects are planned. Indeed, in his book West has included designs of three contemporary American houses incorporating thatched roofs.

The book is packed with photos of picturesque cottages, as well as technical knowledge. Among the subjects discussed: the history of thatch; how to identify the different types of thatch; how to maintain a thatched roof; how to assess its condition and any likely repairs; how to minimize the risk of fire — one of thatch's few disadvantages. There's also a chapter for architects and builders interested in construction techniques most amenable to thatching.

The New American Garden: A Manifesto for Today's Gardener

by Carole Ottesen, 148 pages with color photographs and line drawings throughout. Macmillan Publishing Company, Front & Brown Streets, Riverside, NJ 08075; (800) 323-7445. \$23.99 ppd.

As the title proclaims, this is a declaration of independence for American gardeners who, author Carole Ottesen contends, have been enslaved by the English landscape ideal for more than 300 years. Ottesen believes this long enslavement of the American homeowner to the lawn mower, the flower border, the practice of pruning hedges, and the garage full of pesticides is finally coming to an end. The "new American garden" is composed of sprawling masses of wildflowers and other native plants, clumps of grasses and desert flora, expanses of meadow and prairie. These new landscapes are less time-consuming than traditional gardens, and less costly — to the pocketbook as well as the environment. But, title notwithstanding, they're not totally "new"; Ottesen herself does a convincing job of tracing their roots back to the post-Victorian interest in naturalistic landscapes.



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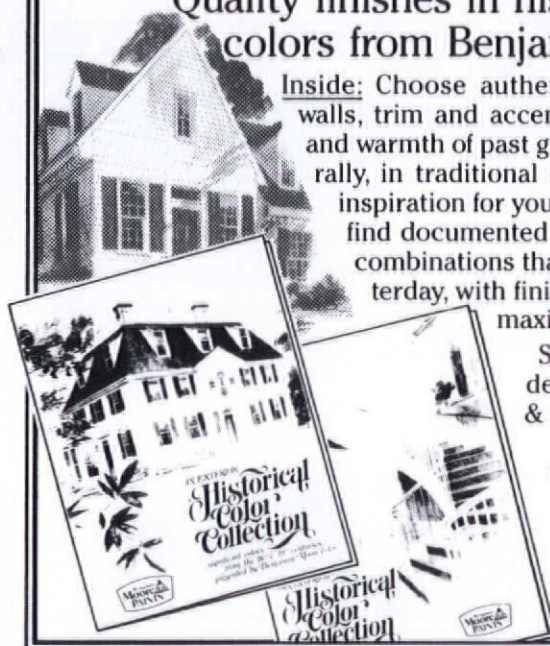
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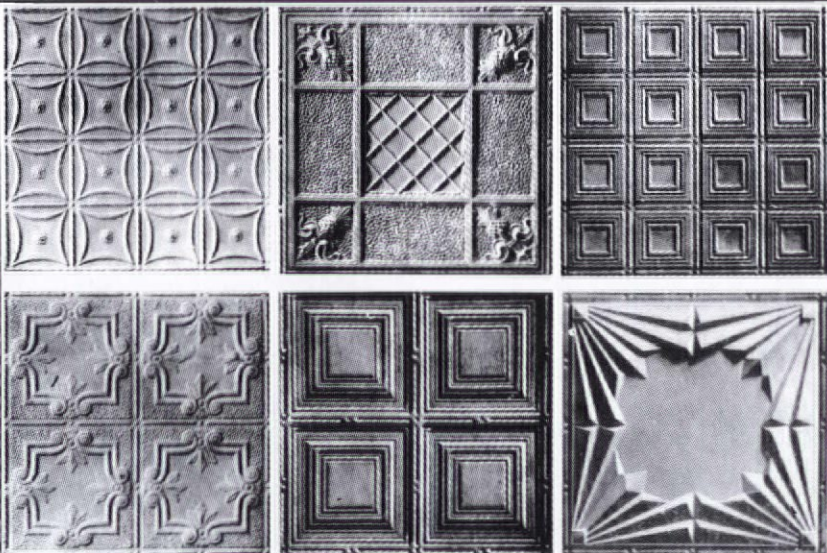
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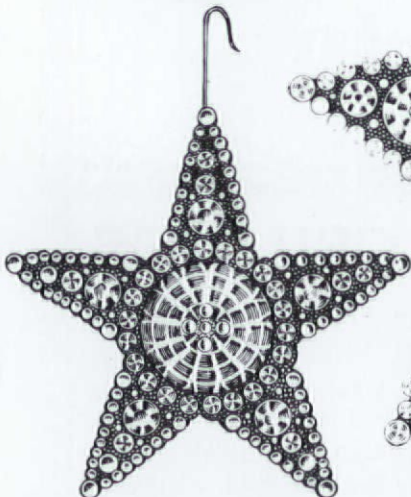
Tree Ornaments

In the late 1800s, Christmas tree ornaments became chic, and entrepreneurs like Gustav A. Mayer began manufacturing them. Mayer opened a shop on Staten Island, New York, in the 1870s to make "Sparkling Brilliant Ornaments" designed to hang on trees and capture the shimmering glow of candlelight. Made of tin and lead, Mayer's ornaments were often



painted in bright, translucent colors that made them appear to be studded with gems.

Tin ornaments fell out of favor early in the 20th century as new electric Christmas tree lights became available. Today, almost 100 years later, William and Janet Rigby are recasting ornaments in Mayer's original moulds — this time in pure tin, for

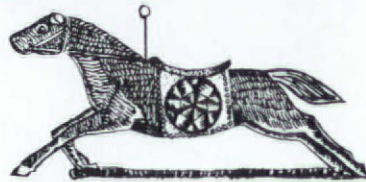


CHRISTMAS ORNAMENTS

safety's sake. They come plain or painted in colors documented from the original examples.

The seven-point hanging star below is 7¾ inches in diameter and costs \$46. The other ornaments pictured on this page are also available from Rigby.

Wm. J. Rigby Co., 3672 Richmond Rd., Dept. OHJ, Staten Island, NY 10306.



The heyday of mouth-blown glass ornaments also began in the 1880s but continued through the 1930s. D. Blumchen & Company sells 56 reproduction blown-glass ornaments, including a Victorian girl, a Santa

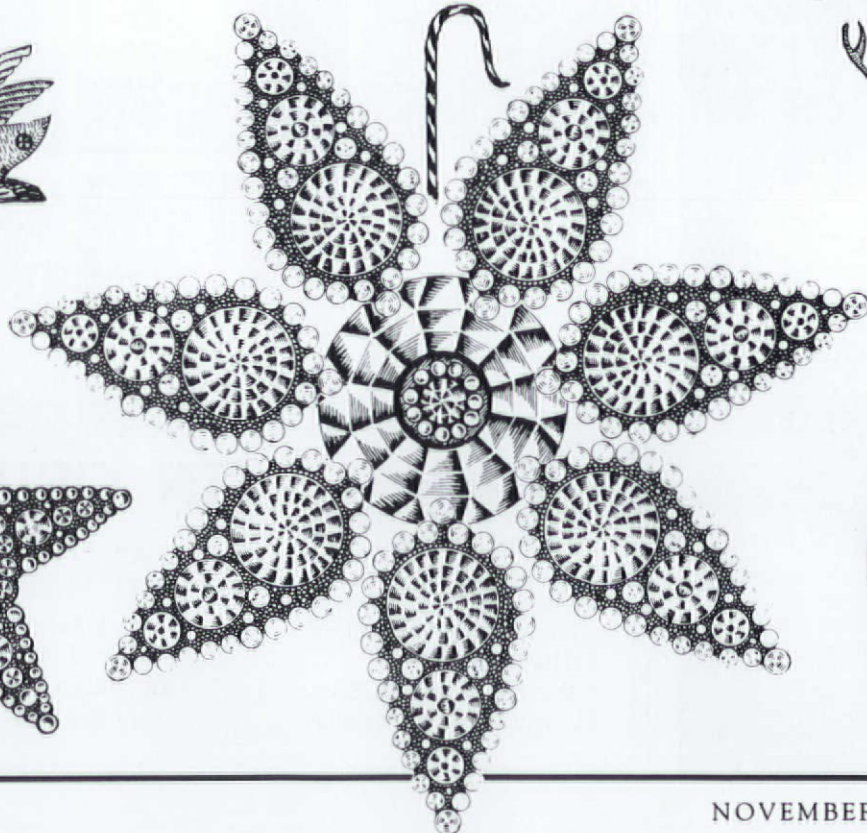
head, a carrot, and a cucumber. The ornaments range in length from 2½ to 5 inches and cost from \$5 to \$10.50 apiece. D. Blumchen also offers a variety of other period-style ornaments.

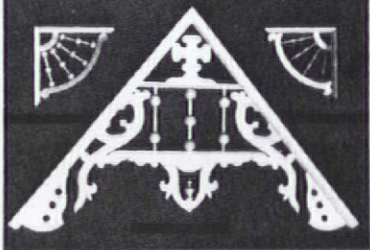
D. Blumchen & Company, Inc., P.O. Box 929, Dept. OHJ, Maywood, NJ 07607. Catalog, \$2.



The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation sells a number of ornaments suitable for early American interiors. Of particular note are the Foundation's wooden ornaments, which include a charming painted Noah's Ark (\$8.50) and a painted angel (\$6.50).

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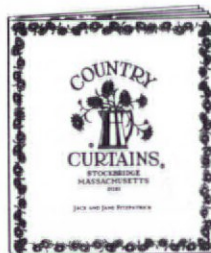


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The Gothic Arch set retails for \$25 and is available from AD LIB, 517

East Paces Ferry Road, Dept. OHJ, Atlanta, GA 30305; (404) 266-2425.

Gothic Armchair

Smith & Watson offers the Gothic Windsor armchair pictured at right. The chair is copied from an antique in London's Victoria & Albert Museum. It's made in England by hand from Yew wood and costs \$1990.

You can find it at fine furniture stores or have an architect or designer order it for you directly from Smith & Watson, The Decorative Arts Center, 305 East 63rd St., Dept. OHJ, New York, NY 10021; (212) 355-5615.



Wildflower Wallpaper

Evoking the small floral patterns in 18th-century wallpaper, Hinson & Company recently introduced the "Wildflowers of America" collection of wallcoverings and coordinating fabrics. It was inspired by Lady Bird Johnson's work for the National Wildflower Research Center, and for each

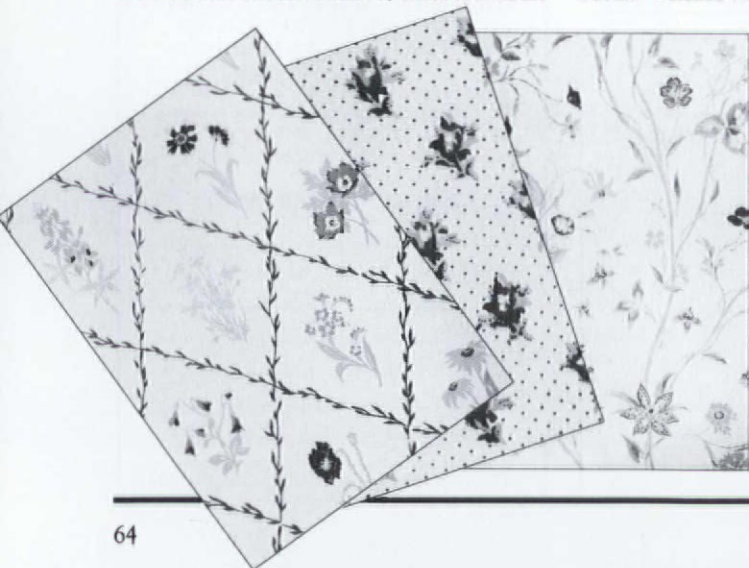
sale, Hinson contributes seed money for the Center's research. These aren't documentary designs, but we think they are appropriate for some colonial-style interiors.

"Claudia," below, left, features Texas wildflowers. The 15'-x-27" rolls of wallpaper cost \$60. Among the 14 additional designs in the collection are "Cathy," center, and "Rebekah," right. They are available at wallpaper stores. Dealers can contact Hinson & Company, 979 Third Ave., Dept. OHJ, New York, NY 10022; (212) 475-4100.

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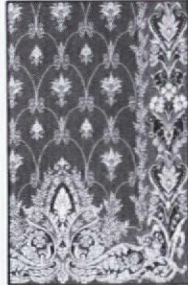
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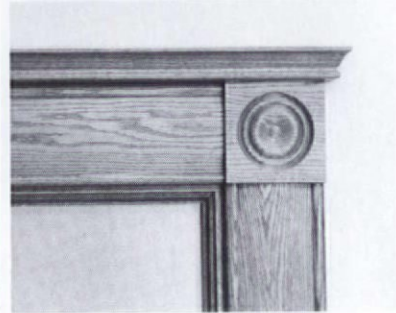
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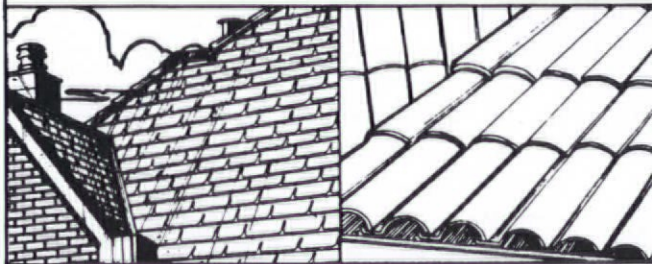
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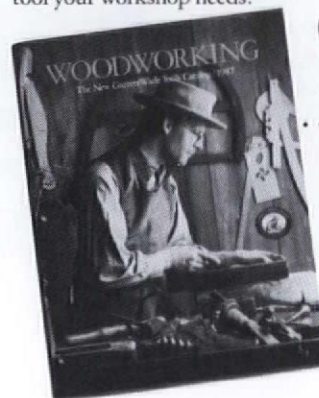
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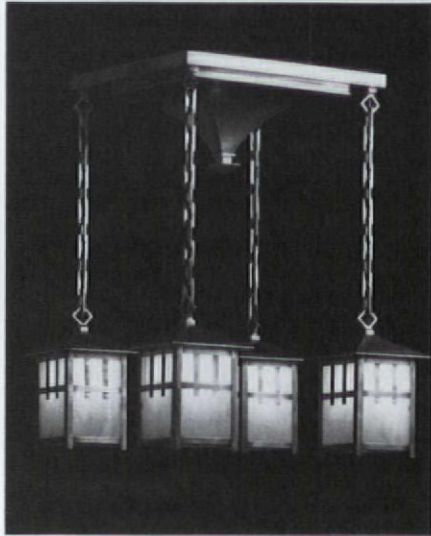
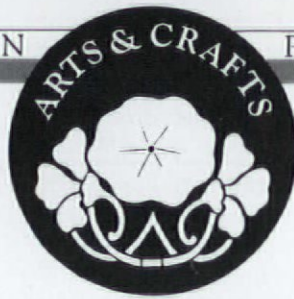
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The "Dearborn," pictured above, is a brand-new addition to the collec-

If the articles on Craftsman houses and Arts and Crafts furnishings have piqued your interest in the style, you should also know about the following small manufacturers who offer stock and semi-custom reproductions.

tion. It costs about \$500. As we went to press, the company was about to introduce a handful of A&C table lamps as well.

The Brass Light Gallery, 719 S. 5th St., Dept. OHJ, Milwaukee, WI 53204; (414) 383-0675.

"Craftsman" Lighting

Jim Kelly of Rejuvenation House Parts has also watched interest in A&C lighting fixtures soar. In fact, the company just added 74 new fixtures to its "Craftsman Collection," bring-



ing the total to 108. The new pieces include the Mission dome table lamp called the "Bridgeton," pictured above. At press time, prices for the new fixtures had not yet been set, but Jim estimates the lamp will cost about \$300. All Rejuvenation's fixtures, with the exception of a cast-iron porch sconce, are solid brass and brightly polished; they're also available in other finishes.

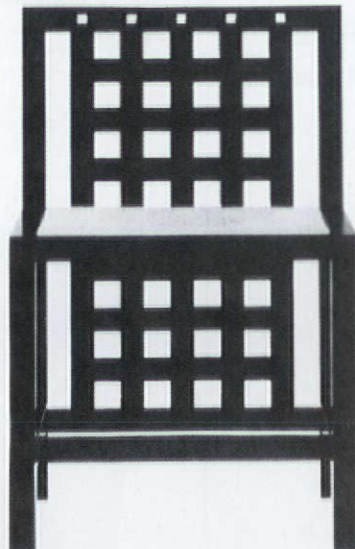
Rejuvenation House Parts, 901 N. Skidmore, Dept. OHJ, Portland, OR 97217; (503) 249-0774. Free Craftsman catalog.

20th-Century Classics

Palazzetti, Inc., manufactures, imports, and distributes more reproductions of early-20th-century furniture classics than anyone. The company specializes in reproductions of pieces by such European designers as Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Joseph Hoffman, and Gerrit Rietveld.

The Mackintosh side chair, right, is made of black-lacquered ash with mother-of-pearl insets (\$1383 in leather). Palazzetti also sells a reproduction Mackintosh gate-leg table and ladderback chair.

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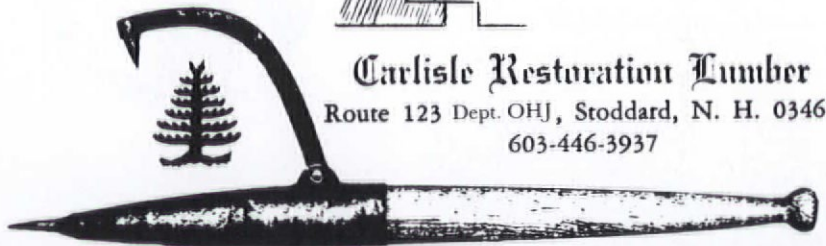
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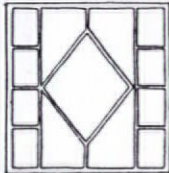
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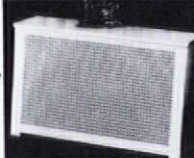
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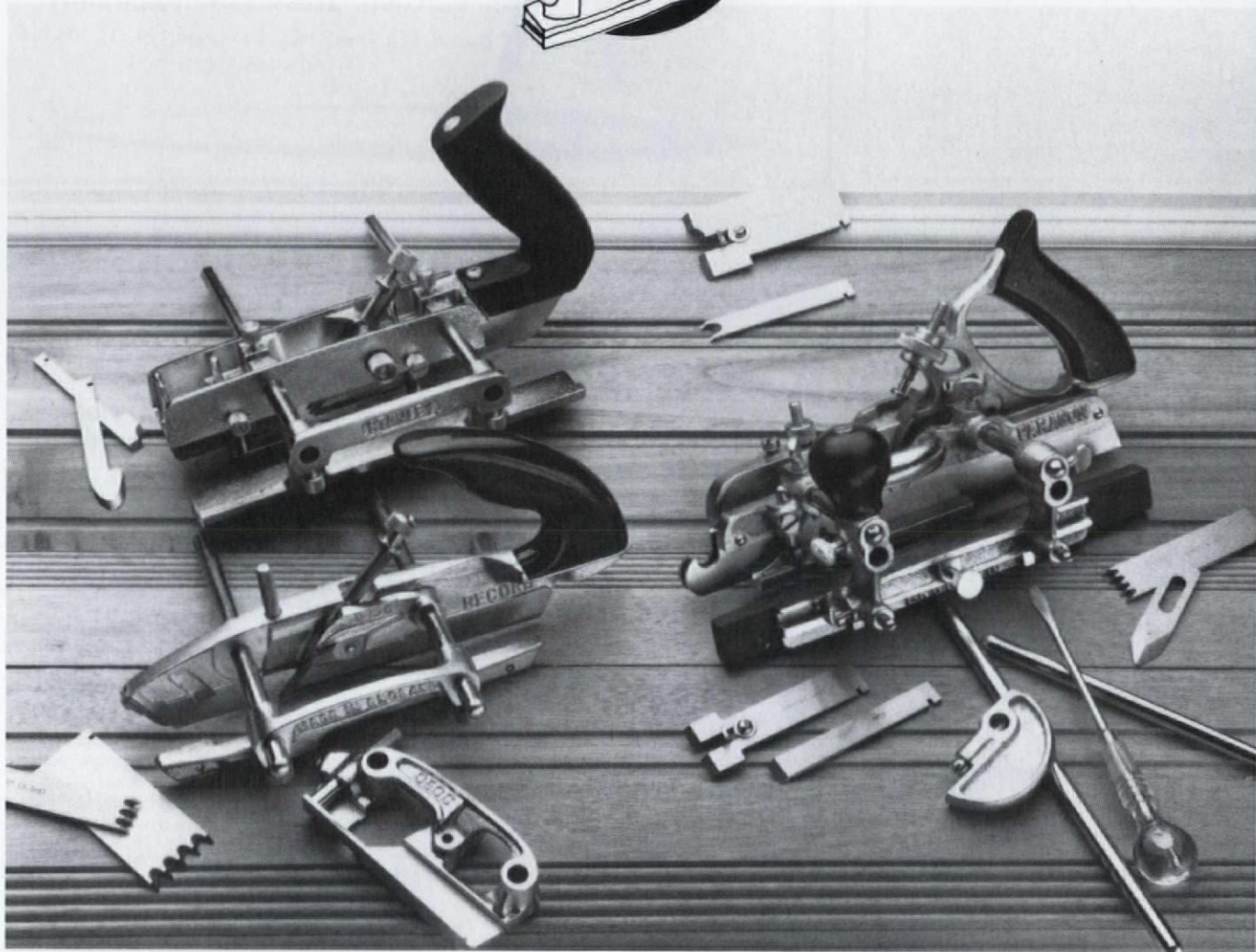
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These listings accompany the hands-on article about moulding repairs on page 26.

With combination planes like Garrett Wade's, below, you can make almost any moulding.



Combination Planes

Planes have been called the string instruments of woodworking because of their subtlety and precision. After almost disappearing from woodworking catalogs, the combination plane is making a comeback. Though they aren't exactly cheap, their numerous cutters allow you to make an almost infinite variety of mouldings.

Garrett Wade sells the three combination planes pictured above. At the top of the photo is the Stanley Combination Plane, which comes with 18 standard cutters and costs \$165.95. Seven special cutters are available for an additional \$61.95. This combination plane is made of

extra-heavy nickel-plated castings.

The Record combination plane (bottom of the photo, left), an "economy" model, is made of cast iron. Only one plough cutter comes with the standard package (\$84.25), but other blades are available. The Paragon Multiplane (bottom of the photo, right) is the top-of-the-line combination plane. It comes with 24 standard cutters (\$449.50); 16 additional cutters are available for \$145.50 extra. With the 40 cutters, the Paragon can do just about anything.

Garrett Wade Company, 161 Ave. of the Americas, Dept. OHJ, New York, NY 10013; (800) 221-2942. Tools catalog, \$4.

Contour Gauge

Woodcraft offers a self-adjusting contour gauge, or "template former," as they call it. Press it against a piece of the moulding you're trying to duplicate, and you've got an instant profile with which to work. The template former is 6" long, scaled in centimeters and millimeters, and costs \$16.50 ppd. It's made in England of 180 tempered Sheffield steel needles, held together with a special tension device to prevent them from falling out or crossing during use.

Woodcraft Supply Corp., 41 Atlantic Ave., P.O. Box 4000, Dept. OHJ, Woburn, MA 01888; (800) 225-1153. Free catalog.

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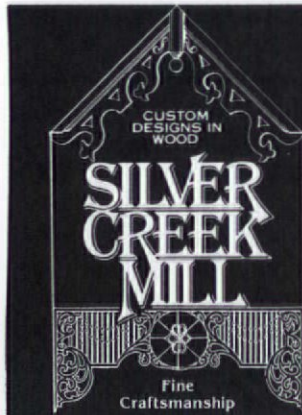
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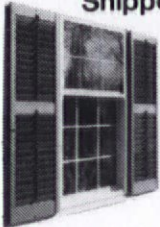
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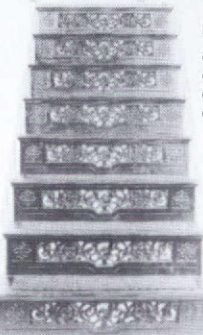
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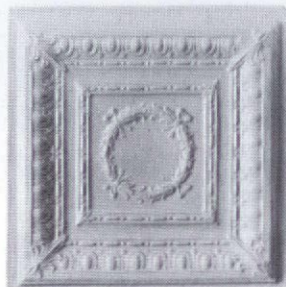
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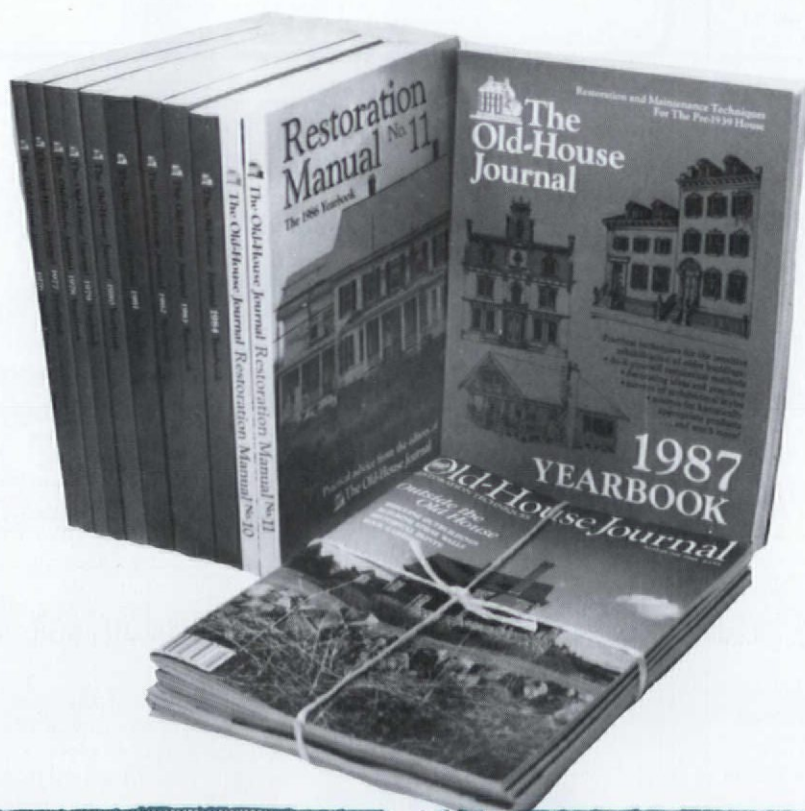
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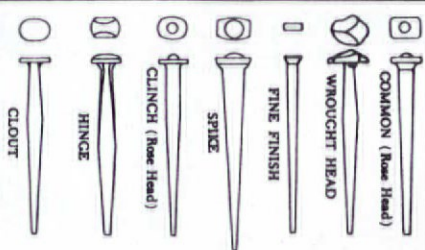
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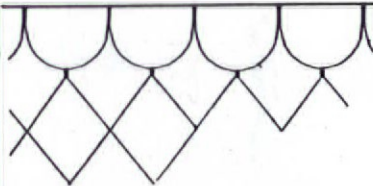
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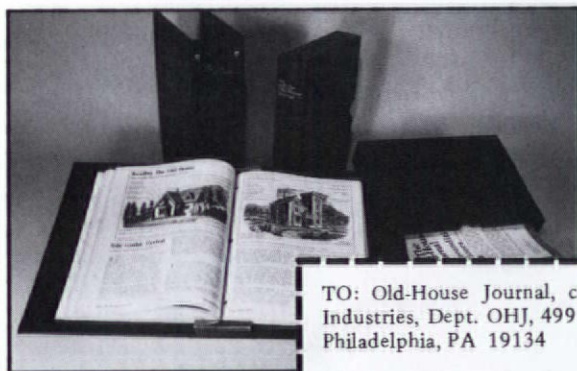
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These are the tools OHJ editors reach for when we strip paint from our own houses.

We can't count the number of times we've been asked which method is *really* best for removing paint. Well, we've seen "miracle" paint removers come and go. We've watched chemical paint strippers almost triple in price in the past 15 years. We've tried just about every heat tool on the market. In our opinion, if you've got more than a door or two to do, heat is the way to go. And the heat tools we reach for when stripping paint from our own wainscot and newel posts are the Heavy-Duty HG-501 Heat Gun and the Warner Heat Plate.

Heat is a fast method because all the paint bubbles and lifts as you go along. There's no waiting for chemicals to soak in, no multiple recoatings, and far less clean-up. Unlike stripping with chemicals, you can remove all layers of paint in a single pass. And because these tools are long-lasting, industrial products, their initial expense is more than made up in savings on the \$18- to \$22-per gallon stripper you're no longer buying in quantity.

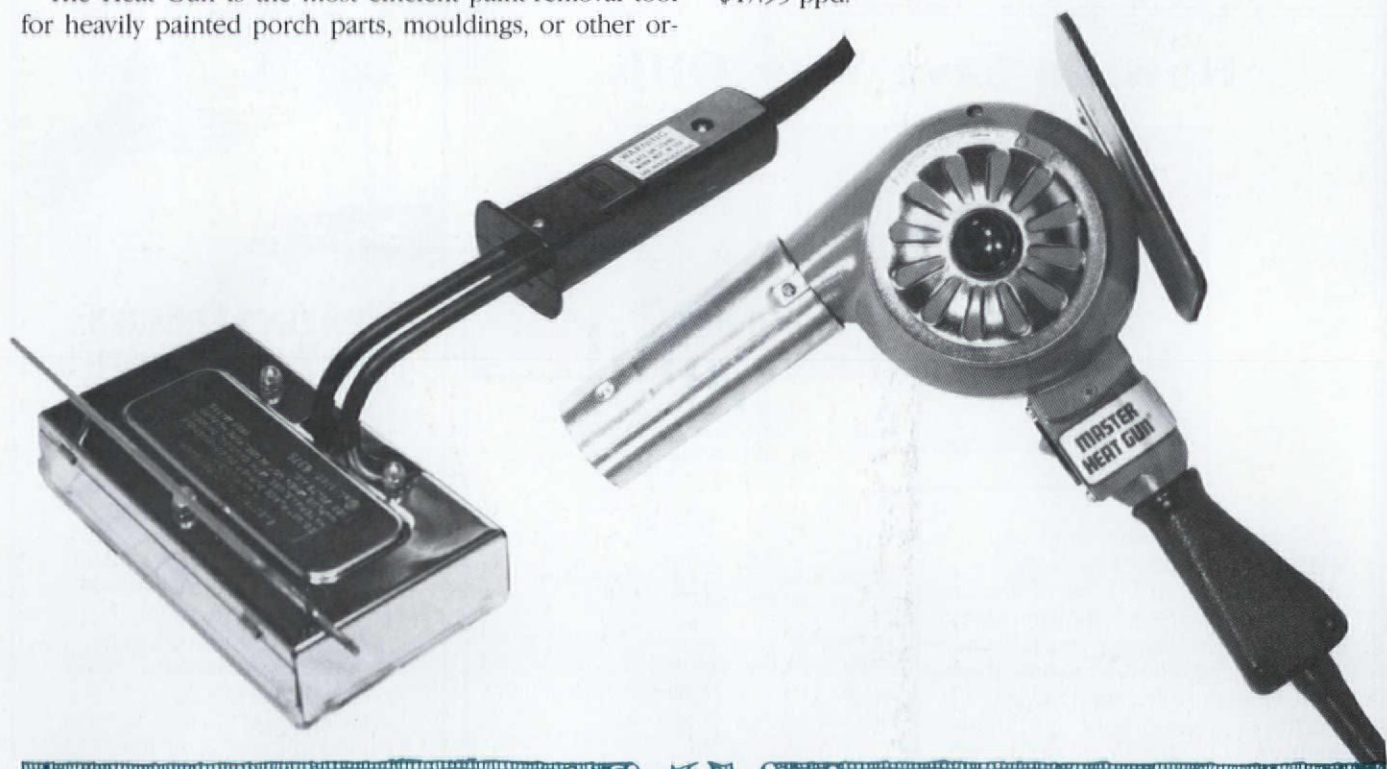
The Heat Gun is the most efficient paint-removal tool for heavily painted porch parts, mouldings, or other or-

namental woodwork. Some chemical stripper is needed for clean-up, but 95% of the paint comes off during the heat-and-scrape. The Heat Gun is not recommended for use on hollow partitions or for stripping entire exteriors.

That's where the Heat Plate comes in handy. It's the most cost-effective and easy-to-use tool for stripping paint from broad, flat surfaces: doors, panelling, baseboards, and exterior wooden clapboards. And it's safer for use on hollow partitions and exterior cornices because there's no blown hot air that could ignite hidden dust. Neither the Heat Plate nor the Heat Gun are recommended for removing varnish.

Both the Heat Gun and the Heat Plate come with complete operating and safety instructions, and are backed by the Old-House Journal Guarantee: If your unit should malfunction for any reason within two months of purchase, simply return it to us and we'll replace it.

To purchase either or both heat tools, use the envelope order-form. The Heat Gun costs \$77.95 ppd; the Heat Plate, \$47.95 ppd.



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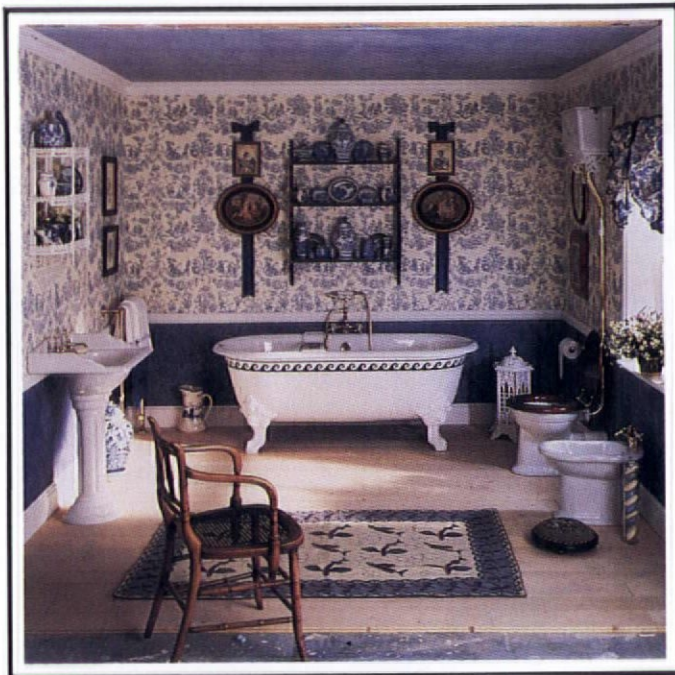
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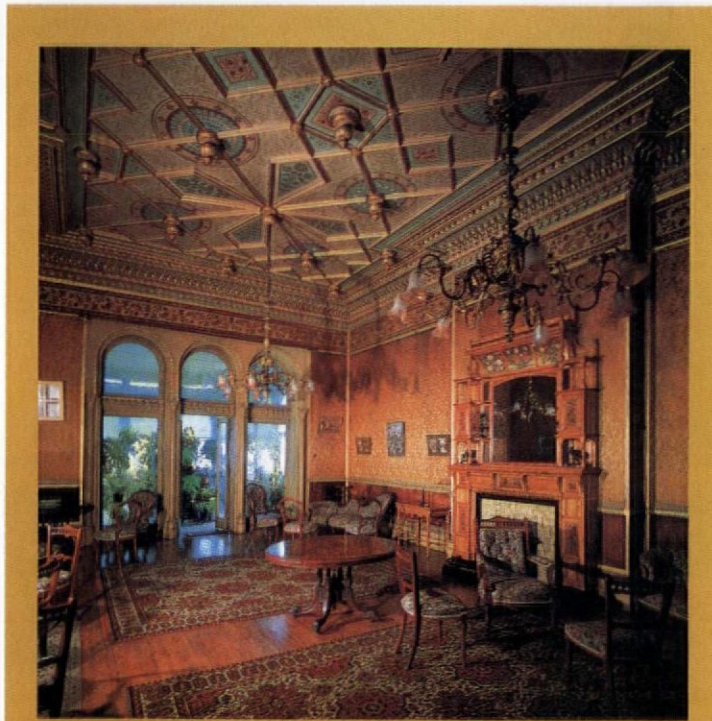
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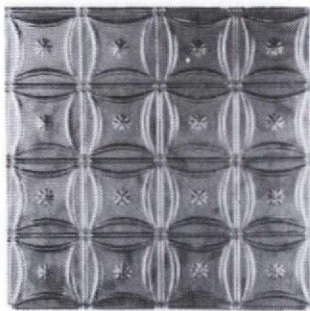


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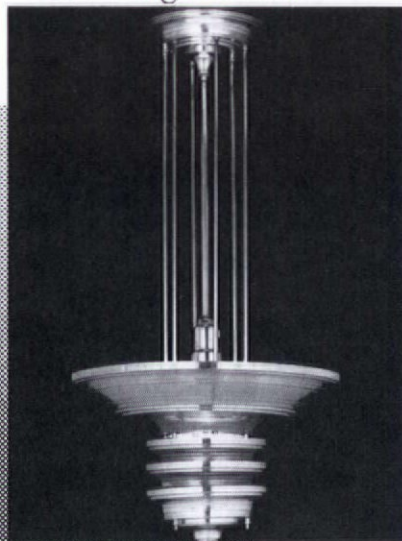
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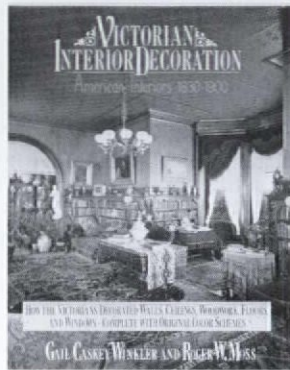
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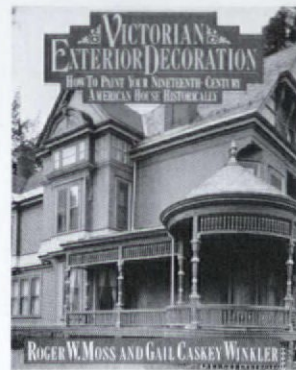
Victorian Interior Decoration

This indispensable guide to *authentic* period decoration covers floors, ceilings, woodwork, window treatments, wallcoverings. Includes 19th-century art and color photos of original interiors, not contemporary "Victorian Revival" rooms. 257 pages, hardbound. \$32.95ppd.



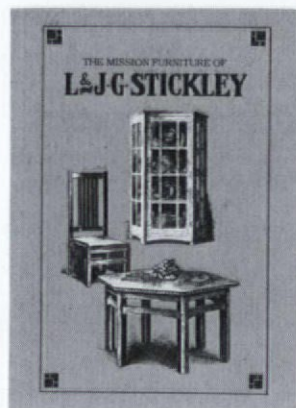
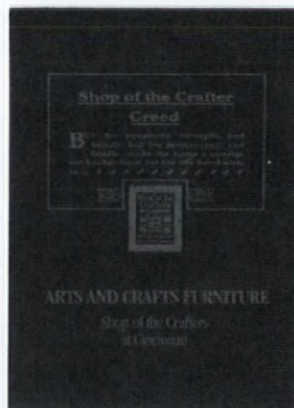
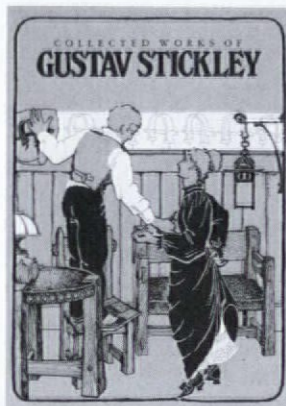
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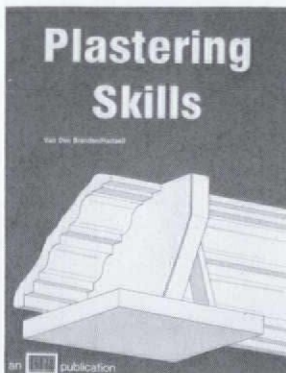
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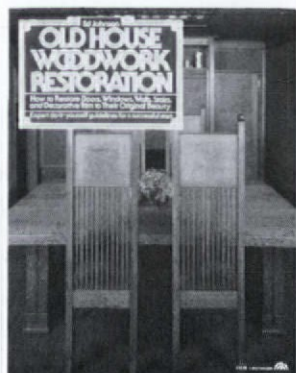
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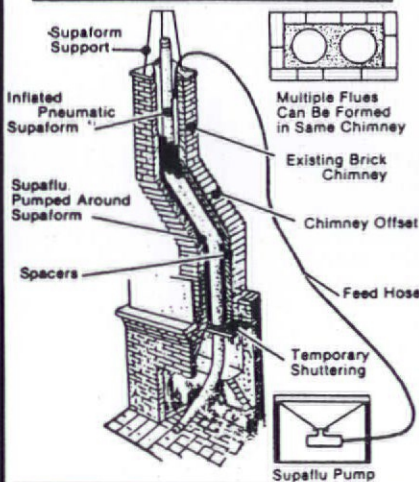
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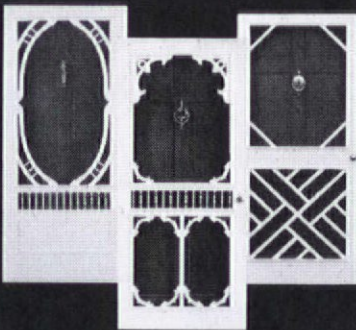
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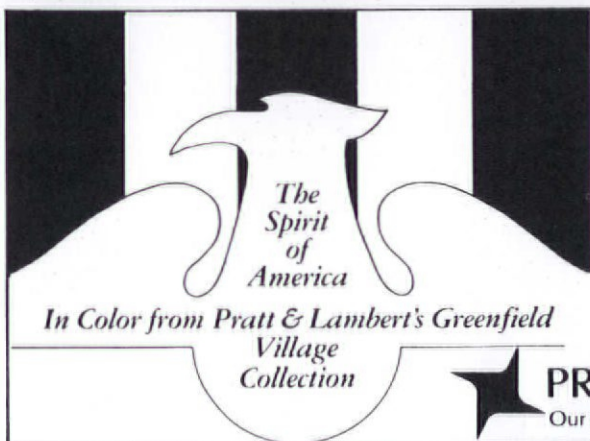


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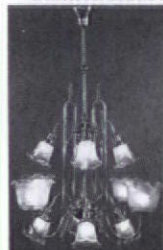
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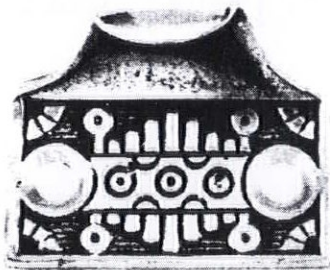
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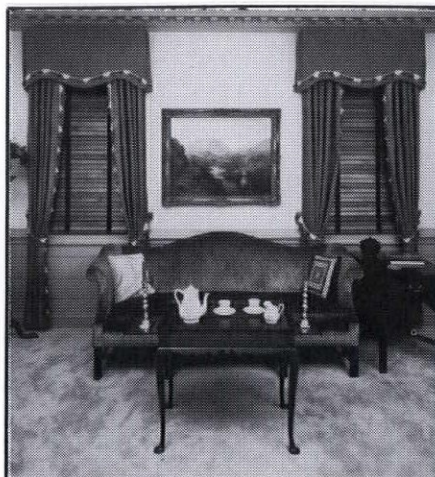
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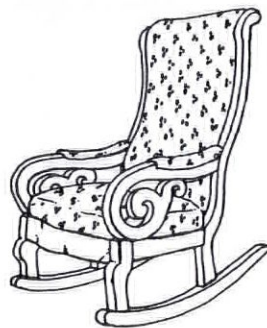
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8 LEADED-GLASS CUPBOARD DOORS, overall 36 x 20 x ¾, glass panel 30¼ x 15, pine frame w/ dark varnish, hinges & knobs, EC, \$300. Pair leaded-glass sidelights, overall 62 x 15½ x 1½, glass panel 56½ x 11¼, small floral medallions, oak frame, EC, \$350. John Hancock, 2561 Glenwood, Toledo, OH 43610. (419) 241-6909.

PAIR OF POCKET DOORS, 30" x 92". Four panel mahogany w/ one coat of paint over original shellac. Bottom roller type. Brooklyn, NY. (718) 638-7157.

GE REFRIGERATOR, 1930s, white, side-by-side doors; needs seals. High-efficiency ammonia compressor in good running condition. B.O., Syracuse, NY 13203. (315) 428-8821.

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS: Reproduction, authentic, old-fashioned, 15-figural-bulb light sets, 120-volt, UL-listed, fused-plug, spares included. \$19.95 each plus \$2.75 UPS. Extra spare bulbs, 3 for \$5.75. Bradford Consultants, PO Box 4020, Alameda, CA 94501. (415) 523-1968.

COAL STOVE, "Sunshine," Reading Stove Works, c. 1920, grey porcelain, 6 burners, good condition. Includes overhead warming oven & many utensils/tools. \$1,200 or best offer. Pancoe, 616 W. Upsal Street, Philadelphia, PA 19119. (215) 849-8233.

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DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA Bed & Breakfast. Arrowhead Inn, restored 1775 plantation w/ 8 guest rooms, private & shared baths. Full breakfast included in rates of \$50 to \$85 per room + state tax. 106 Mason Rd., Durham, NC 27712. (919) 477-8430.

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MEETINGS & EVENTS

OLD-FASHIONED XMAS in Brownville, NE: Saturday & Sunday, Nov. 26-27 & Dec. 3-4, 1 to 5 PM. Admission \$6; children under 12, free. Tour of homes, bake sale, quilt display, Xmas music, special exhibit & sale of works by outstanding Midlands artists & craftsmen. For advanced ticket sales, write Xmas 88 Tickets, Box 4, Brownville, NE 68321.

2ND VERMONT CONFERENCE on Fire Safety & Historic Preservation will be held from Nov. 1-2 at the Ascutney Mountain Resort in Brownville, VT. The material covered will be useful to builders, engineers, architects, code-enforcement officials, real-estate professionals, & historic-property owners. Contact Charlotte K. Barrett, Director, Preservation Institute for the Building Crafts, PO Box 1777, Windsor, VT 05089. (802) 674-6752.

"NEW BERN AT NIGHT" — a tour of historic homes accompanied by musical entertainment, excellent wines, & elegant hors d'oeuvres, on Saturday, Nov. 12 at New Bern, NC. Hours are from 5 to 9 PM; tickets,

\$17.50. Tickets must be purchased in advance, & are available from the New Bern Historical Society, PO Box 119, New Bern, NC 28560. For group rates, contact Kathy Beckwith, (919) 638-8558.

35TH-ANNUAL SALISBURY ANTIQUES SHOW will be held on Nov. 3 & 4 in the Salisbury Civic Center in historic Salisbury & Rowan County, NC. Over 20 dealers from a wide area of the eastern U.S. will display & sell antiques. Hours are 10 AM to 9 PM, Thursday the 3rd; 10 AM to 5 PM, Friday the 4th. For more information, contact Mrs. Edward T. Taylor, (704) 636-3101.

THIRD BIENNIAL QUILT EXHIBITION, Oct. 29-Nov. 13, 10 AM to 4 PM, daily; 1-5 PM, Sundays. A quilt contest & exhibition will be held at the Belle Grove Plantation, an 18th-century manor house located 1½ miles south of Middletown, VA, on U.S. 11. Adults, \$3.50; children 6-16, \$1.75. For more information, contact Belle Grove, Inc., PO Box 137, Middletown, VA 22645. (703) 869-2080.

MEMORIES OF A VICTORIAN XMAS at the Woodruff-Fontaine House, a 19th-century mansion in a Victorian village: Dec. 1 through 31, 10 AM to 4 PM, Mon.-Sat; 1 to 4 PM, Sunday; closed Xmas Eve & Xmas Day. Holiday music, candlelight tour, Xmas stories, more. Woodruff-Fontaine House, 680 Adams Ave., Memphis, TN 38105. (901) 526-1469.

THE CORBIT-SHARP HOUSE in historic Odessa, DE, will celebrate the life & works of Charles Dickens w/ a series of holiday programs, tours, & displays beginning Dec. 3 & 4, "Xmas in Odessa" weekend. For more information, contact Historic Houses of Odessa, PO Box 507, Odessa, DE 19730.

5TH-ANNUAL RESTORATION FAIR to be held in the First Bank of the United States, located at Third Street in Philadelphia, on Saturday, Oct. 29, from 11 AM to 4 PM. A roster of artisans and suppliers will be on hand to give expert advice to homeowners, architects, & contractors on an individual basis. The program and its brochure are free to the public. For more information, call the Maxwell Mansion at (215) 438-1861 or the Preservation Coalition at (215) 546-0531.

13TH-ANNUAL "Christmas Through The Windows" on the 17-acre grounds of Old Cowtown Museum, 1871 Sim Park Drive, Wichita, KS 67203, November 28 through December 3, 7-9 PM. This historic village museum has over 30 authentically furnished buildings depicting Wichita & Sedgewick County during their early years, 1865-80. Exhibits include Wichita's first city jail, the One-Room School, Fritz Snitzler's Saloon, the elegant 1874 Murdock House, & a working blacksmith shop. Adults, \$1.50; children 6-12, 50¢. For more information, call (316) 264-0671.

10TH-ANNUAL Springfield Preservation And Restoration Tour on November 12 & 13, noon to 6 PM. Some dozen beautifully restored, turn-of-the-century homes will be featured along with other events. For more information, contact SPAR, PO Box 3192, Jacksonville, FL 32206. (904) 353-SPAR.

30TH-ANNUAL ANTIQUES CONFERENCE WEEK-END, Oct. 28-30, at Old Sturbridge Village, MA: lectures, tours, meals, workshops, recitals, & more. For further information, contact Visitor Services Dept. at (508) 347-3362.

XMAS TOURS at Mimosa, northern Kentucky's largest single-family house (built in 1853-5), on Saturdays & Sundays in December from 1 to 8 PM. For further information, contact Mimosa Restoration, 412 E. 2nd St., Covington, KY 41011. (606) 261-9000.

"XMAS IN LOCKELAND SPRINGS," 10th annual homes tour. Candlelight tour Saturday, Dec. 10, 5 to 8 PM; afternoon tour Sunday, Dec. 11, noon to 4. Admission, \$5. City's oldest holiday tour begins at Holly Street Fire Hall, 1600 Holly Street, East Nashville Historic District. For further information, write PO Box 60734, Nashville, TN 37206.

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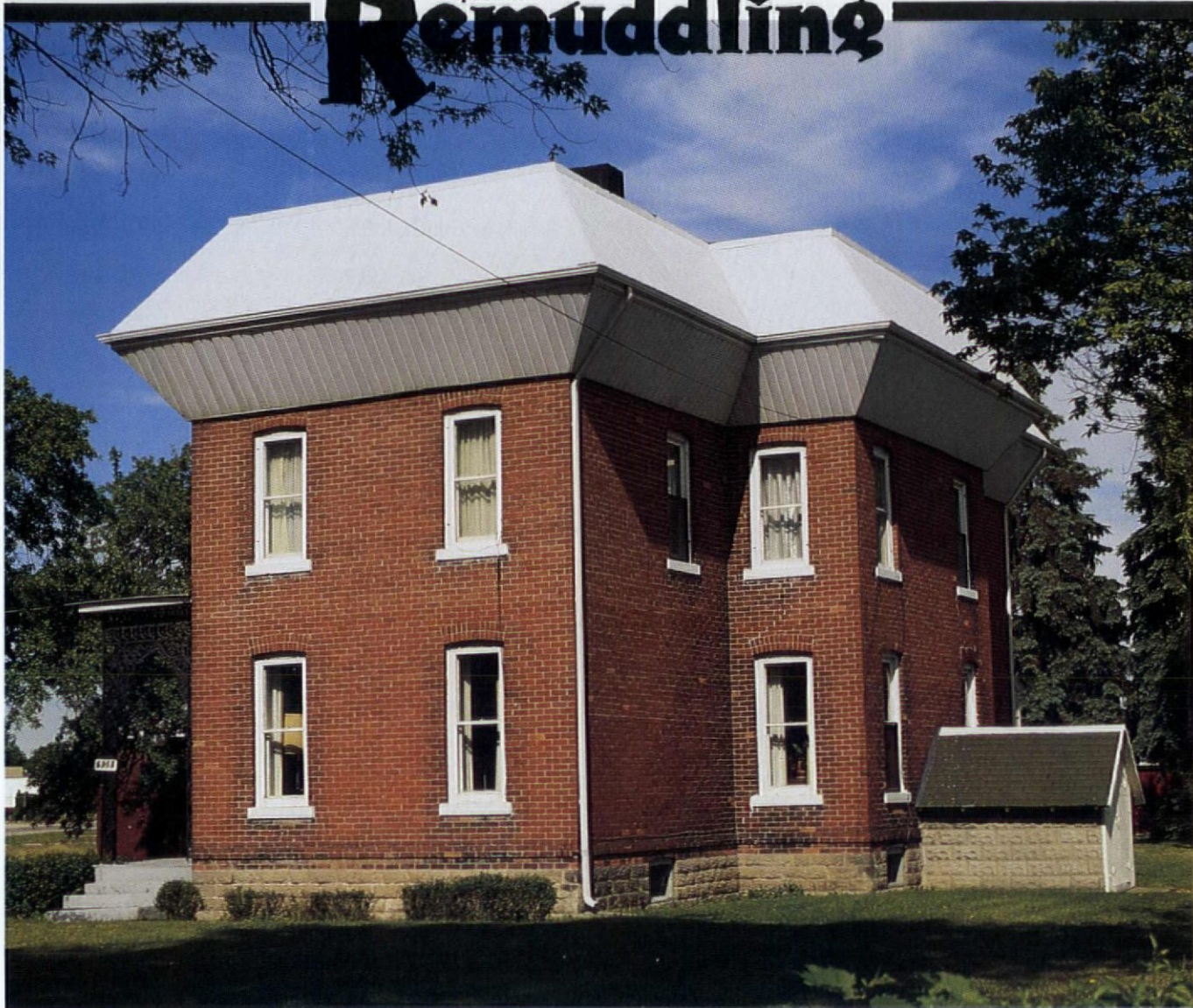
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opinion...
Remuddling



McMuddling



Too bad the remuddled house wasn't cared for the way this one was!

"The house with the aluminum (?) hat and remuddled porch is in southeastern Michigan, north of Toledo," reports Gary Koehler, who sent us these photos. "I've seen it at least a dozen times, but it still makes me wince as I drive by."

We're not sure that the roof encasement is aluminum. We've theorized, in fact, that it's Styrofoam — making the roof a whopper of a fast-food box. But whatever the roof is made of, this remuddling sure turned Second Empire into hamburger.



WIN FAME AND \$50: If you spot a classic example of remuddling, send us clear color slides. We'll award \$50 if your photos are selected. The message is more dramatic if you send along a picture of a similar unremuddled building. Remuddling Editor, The Old-House Journal, 69A Seventh Avenue, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11217.

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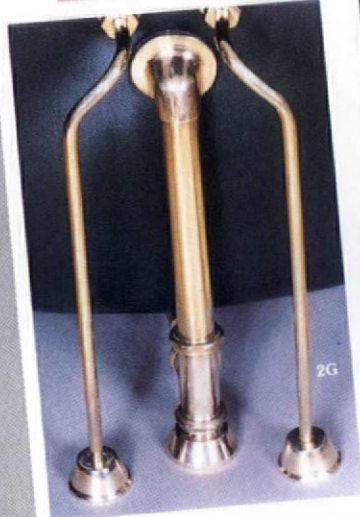


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Mill-Town Cottages

The 19th-century village of Harrisville, New Hampshire, is now a National Historic Landmark. Quite an honor, even for the most classic of mill towns — those picturesque mercantile hamlets born of a paternalistic concept. Mill owners offered housing as part of the employment carrot to compete with farming for available labor. Besides cottages, they built boardinghouses for single employees, the company store with dance hall above, and a post office, school, church, and library.



Immigrant families of Finnish descent lived in small cottages like these along "Peasewick Row." Quite often, two families shared one dwelling. Tiny Harrisville has three sets of mill houses, two in the Greek Revival style, built around the mid-1860s for \$600 each. Most are wood frame; several are brick. The brick versions on School Street exhibit handsome, detailed brickwork in the pediments.

Small but Yankee-utilitarian, the houses have graceful gable ends that face the road or mill pond. The rear ell was used for wood storage. (Some have been converted into studios with sleeping lofts.) A shed at the back of the ell housed the old two-seater.

